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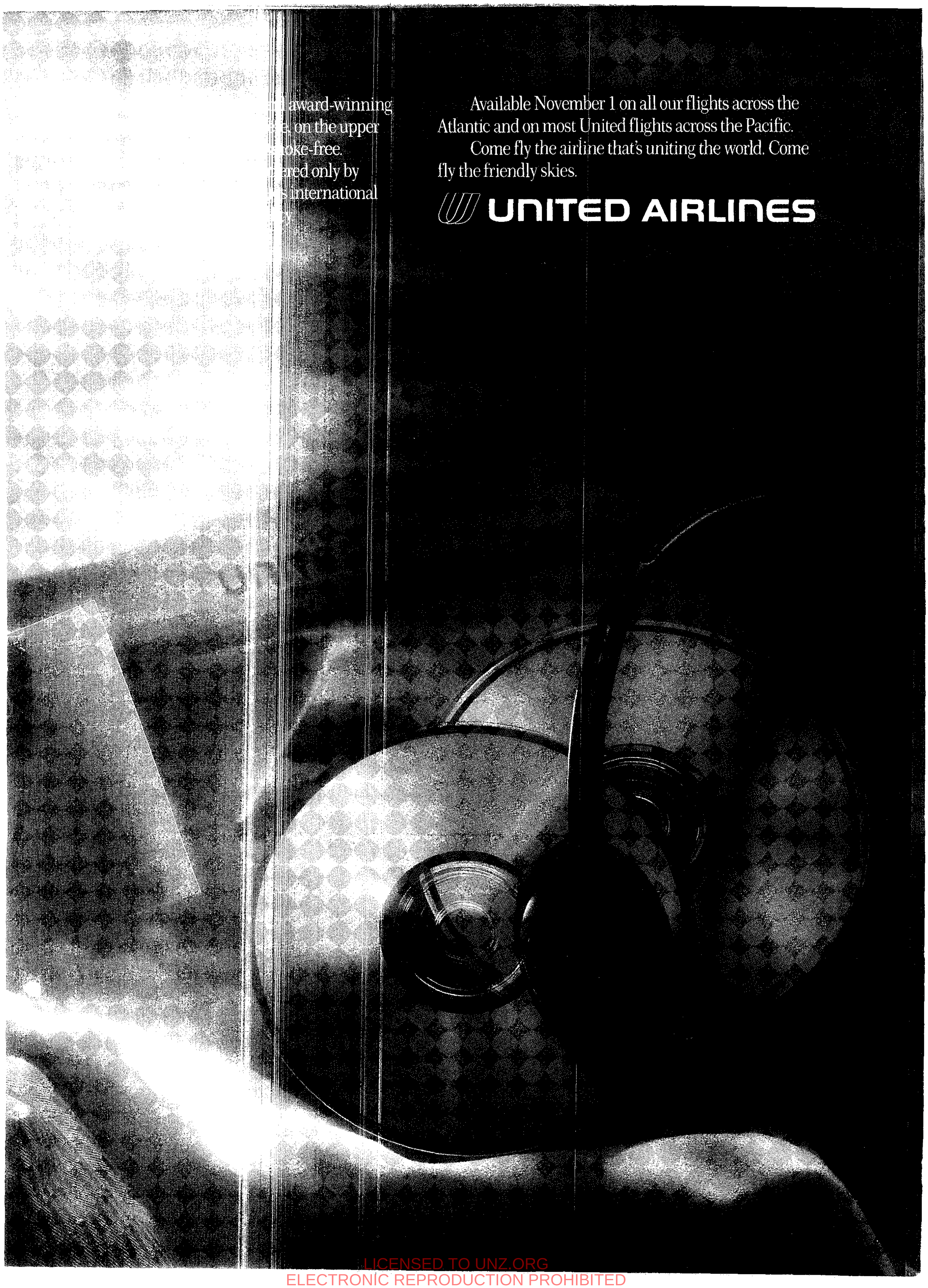

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

Musicals Unlimited, which focusses on concert revivals rather than on fully staged ones, sprang up this past spring, and its current venture, the first New York airing of "Pipe Dream" in thirty-five years, will open October 11. It's hard to believe that any Rodgers and Hammerstein score could have lain on the shelf for so long; maybe local performances of "Allegro" and "Me and Juliet" will follow. This "Pipe Dream" is welcome, of course, but its announcement reminded us of just how unadventurous the revivals policy of most New York theatres can be. Why do we only get work by the tried and true? This problem is even more acute among non-musical productions. When an obscure play is resurrected, why is it almost always something by Ibsen or Strindberg or Shaw rather than a gem by a forgotten or ill-served author?

One writer we'd particularly like to see unearthed locally is Alexander Ostrovsky. This nineteenth-century Muscovite is rarely produced in New York: his Russianness is thought to be an insuperable problem, and translating the extremely idiomatic speech of his characters—who are often speculators, crooks, or swindlers—can be dicey. But the political uncertainties that have made Chekhov the supreme classic playwright of our age (displacing Brecht) could also make Ostrovsky's work resonate again. His 1868 play "Too Clever by Half (or the Diary of a Scoundrel)" is the place to start. This story of a young rapscallion making his way in a new capitalist era offers both renewed political associations and enduring comic appeal. The play is more than a study of manners, although Ostrovsky's exposure of bourgeois hypocrisies does put him in the same league as Sheridan and Molière, recalling especially the latter's "Misanthrope" (now being revived by the York Theatre Company, by the way). That the Ostrovsky piece can still affect a contemporary audience was revealed a few years ago in a London revival, where Alex Jennings played the scoundrel to brilliant effect. To have that performance transplanted here, in an adaptation by, say, David Mamet: another pipe dream?

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

André Heller's Wonderhouse—A show that is billed as a "theatrical entertainment." Previews begin Oct. 11. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

The Baby Dance—Linda Purl and Stephanie Zimbalist star in a new play by Jane Anderson. In previews. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

Beau Jest—A comedy by James Sherman, which was originally done last year, in Chicago. Previews Oct. 8-9. Opens Oct. 10 at 7:30. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

Circle Repertory Company—The first play of the season is Timothy Mason's **BABYLON GARDENS.** Timothy Hutton and Mary-Louise Parker head the cast. Directed by Joe Mantello.Opens Oct. 8 at 8. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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13	14	15	16			

Dancing at Lughnasa—The Abbey Theatre production of Brian Friel's new play. Patrick Mason directed, and the cast consists of Bríd Brennan, Catherine Byrne, Donal Donnelly, Robert Gwilym, Rosaleen Linehan, Gerard McSorley, Dearbhla Molloy, and Bríd Ní Neachtain. Previews begin Oct. 11. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Distant Fires—Giancarlo Esposito and Ray Anthony Thomas in a play written by Kevin Heelan and directed by Clark Gregg. Previews Oct. 11-15. Opens Oct. 16 at 8. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 645-8755.)

Finkel's Follies—A show conceived by and starring Fyvush Finkel. In previews. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

The Homecoming—A revival of the Harold Pinter play inaugurates the Roundabout Theatre's first season in its new Broadway location. With Lindsay Crouse, Roy Dotrice, Daniel Gerroll, and Jonathan Hogan. Previews begin Oct. 9. (Criterion Center, Broadway at 45th St. 239-6200.)

Nick & Nora—Barry Bostwick and Joanna Gleason are Nick and Nora Charles in this musical murder mystery—inspired by Dashiell Hammett's "Thin Man" characters—by Arthur Laurents (book), Charles Strouse (score), and Richard Maltby, Jr. (lyrics). Mr. Laurents directed. Also with Christine Baranski and Chris Sarandon. In previews. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

The Novelist—In his new play, Howard Fast has given Jane Austen a love interest named Captain Thomas Crighton. Previews begin Oct. 9. (Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

On Borrowed Time—A revival of the 1938 play by Paul Osborn, with George C. Scott, who also directed, Conrad Bain, Nathan Lane, and Teresa Wright. Preview on Oct. 8. Opens Oct. 9 at 6:45. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

Pipe Dream—A concert version of the 1955 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical. Presented by Musicals Unlimited, Oct. 11-13. (Mazur Theatre, Asphalt Green, 555 E. 90th St. For information about tickets, call 744-1925.)

Return to the Forbidden Planet—A musical, imported from London, loosely based on the 1956 movie "Forbidden Planet." Bob Carlton wrote the book and directed; the rock-and-roll score consists of fifties and sixties tunes. The cast includes Gabriel Barre, Julee Cruise, and Steve Steiner. Previews through Oct. 12. Opens Oct. 13 at 6. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

OPENED RECENTLY

And the World Goes 'Round: The Songs of Kander & Ebb—A musical revue, with Joel Blum, Terry Burrell, Bob Cuccioli, Marin Mazzie, and Karen Ziémba. Andrea Green substitutes for Ms. Ziémba in some performances. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Body and Soul—John Jason and Tom Delling star in John Glines' gay romantic comedy. (Courtyard Playhouse, 39 Grove St. 869-3530.)

Bon Appétit!—Jean Stapleton in two short operas by Lee Hoiby. The first is a musical staging of Ruth Draper's monologue "The Italian Lesson"; the second is a setting of a Julia Child cooking lesson. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

Breaking Legs—The Mafia meets Off Broadway. Vincent Gardenia and Joseph Mascolo play a pair of mobsters who back a new play in order to win a young dramatist for Gardenia's daughter. Tom Dulack wrote the comedy; John Tillinger directed it. With Larry Storch, Ronald Maccone, Nick Wyman, and, above all, Susan Giosa as the daughter who spins the plot. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/3/91.) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Damien—William Walsh is a priest in this 1976 play by Aldyth Morris. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318.)

Damon Runyon's Tales of Broadway—A show conceived and performed by John Martello. (Double Image, 15 Vandam St. 924-1120.)

Folks Remembers a Missing Page—A one-man show by J. E. Gaines. Sonny Jim, Mr. Gaines' alter ego, is an opinionated old derelict, sharp of mind and memory, who evokes, by description and with light stabs of mimicry of many of its snappier citizens, the golden days of Harlem, before the Second World War. Much of the material is familiar, but it seems fresh as paint. Andre Mtumi directed. (10/7/91) (Nat Horne, 440 W. 42nd St. 307-7171.)

The Good Times Are Killing Me—The carto[illegible]ist Lynda Barry devised this memory play of words and pop tunes about a racially mixed neighborhood. At the heart of it is the friendship of two little girls, one white, the other black, who are delightfully portrayed by Angela Goethals and Chandra Wilson. The undercurrent of serious comment on race doesn't add much, but every humorous scene scores a bull's-eye. Mark Brokaw directed. (5/6/91) (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

Jean Cocteau Repertory—Presenting two plays in rotating repertory: **THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH,** by Thornton Wilder, and **GENEVA,** by George Bernard Shaw. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

Lips Together, Teeth Apart—Two couples share a beach house on Fire Island over the Fourth of July weekend, in Terrence McNally's very funny play about a number of serious matters. With Roxanne Hart, Anthony Heald, Jonathan Hadary, and Deborah Rush; directed by John Tillinger. Starting Oct. 15, Hillary Dailey-Smith replaces Ms. Rush. (7/8/91) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

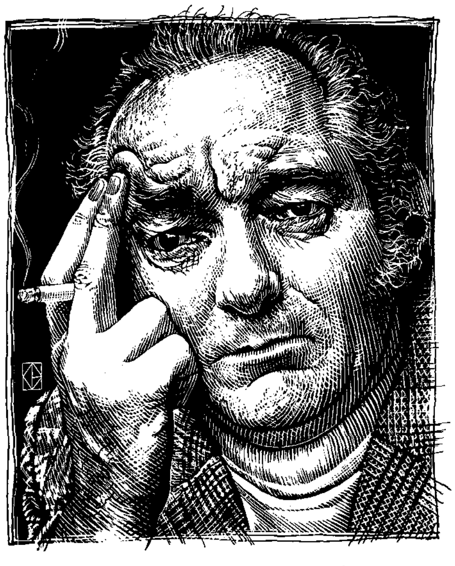
Lost in Yonkers—There's not one glimmer of honesty or authenticity in this family melodrama by Neil Simon. Set in Yonkers during the Second World War, it's about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (3/11/91) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

Macbeth—Stephen McHattie stars in the Riverside Shakespeare Company's season opener. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

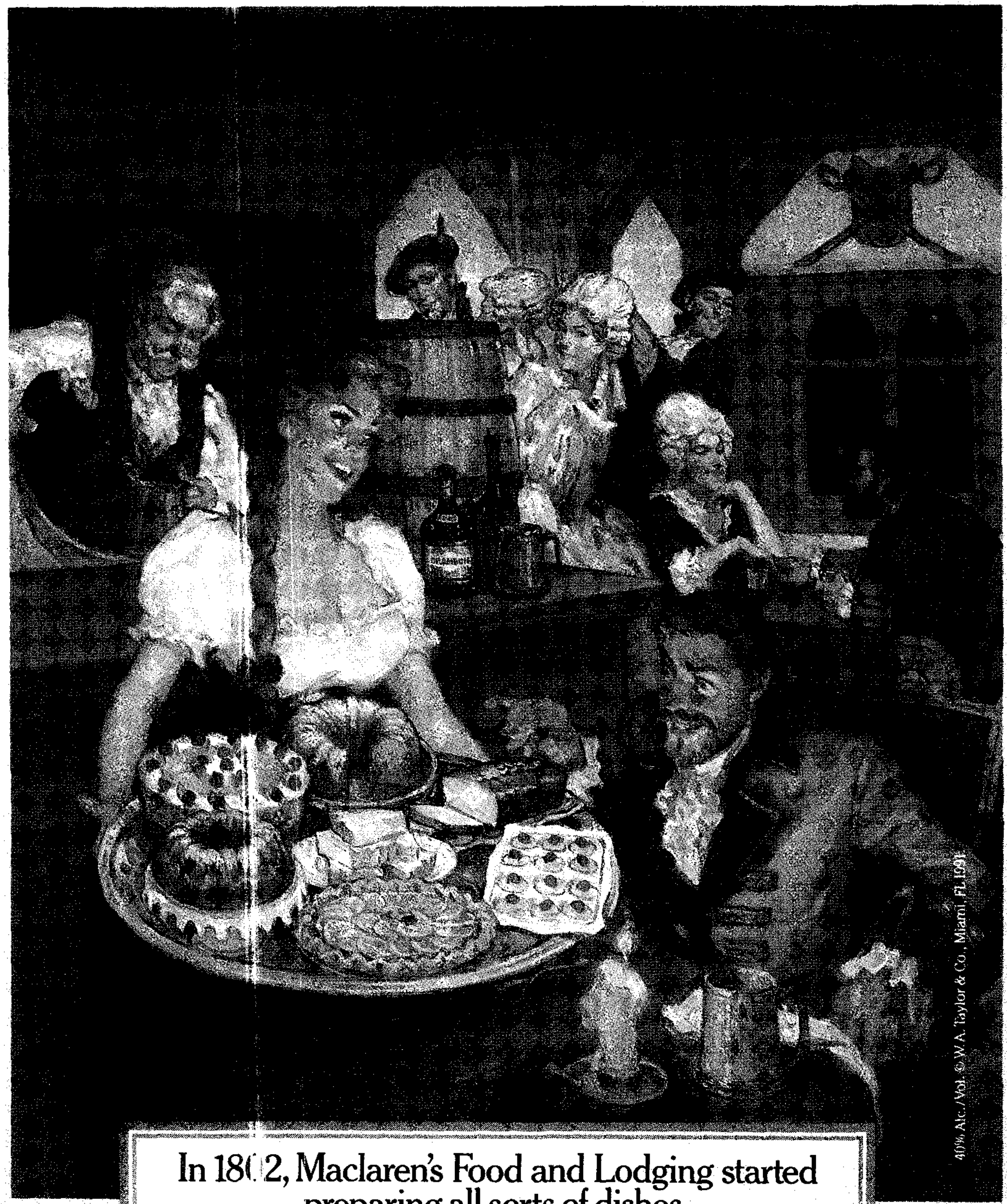
Miss Saigon—Oh, the horror! The horror! (4/29/91) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)

Pageant—A musical spoof of beauty contests. Book and lyrics by Bill Russell and Frank Kelly and music by Albert Evans. (Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 262-3333.)

Penn & Teller Rot in Hell—Seen recently on the Great White Way, the dynamic duo are now performing their repertoire of tricks Off



Brian Friel, author of "Dancing at Lughnasa"



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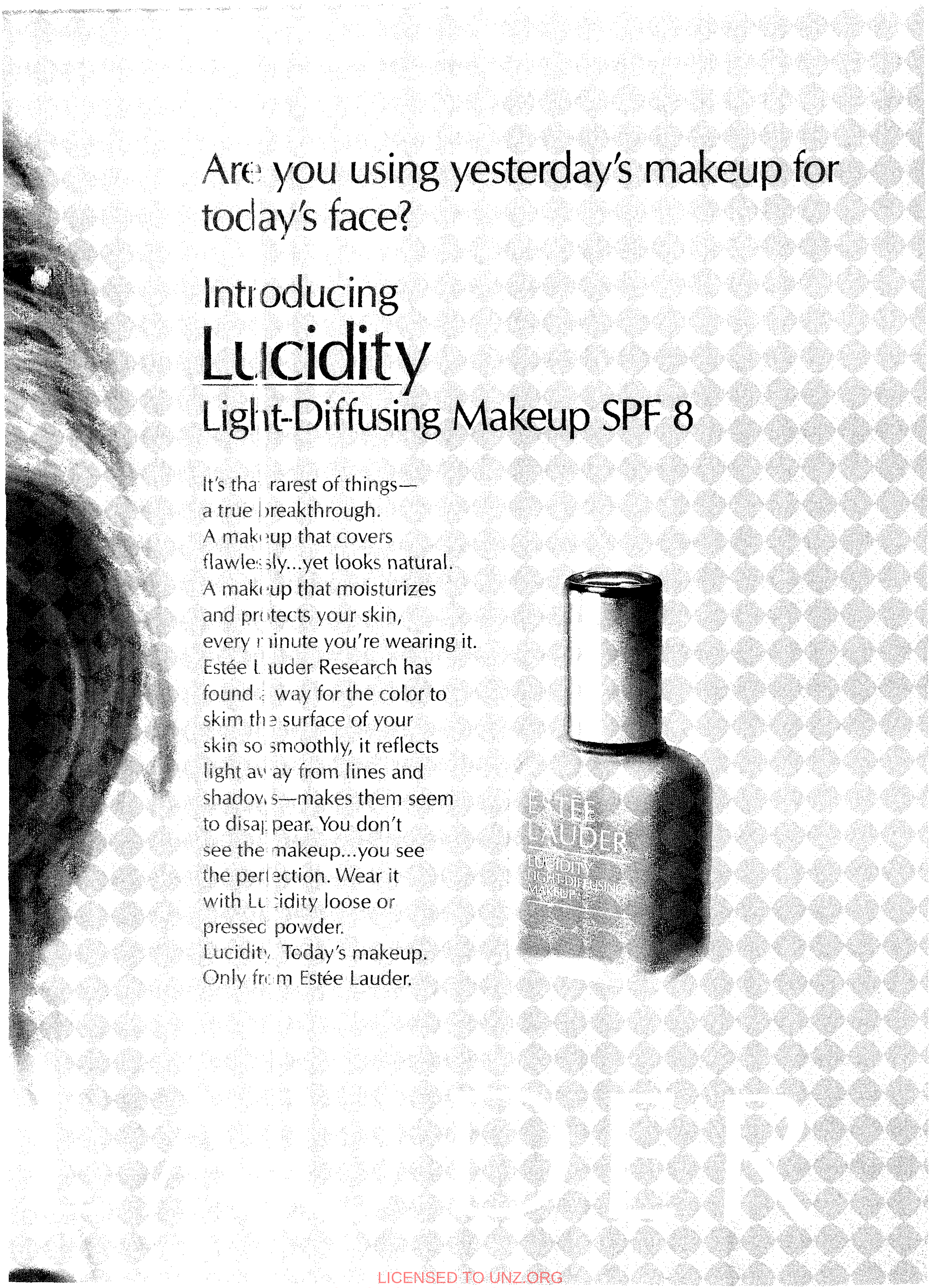

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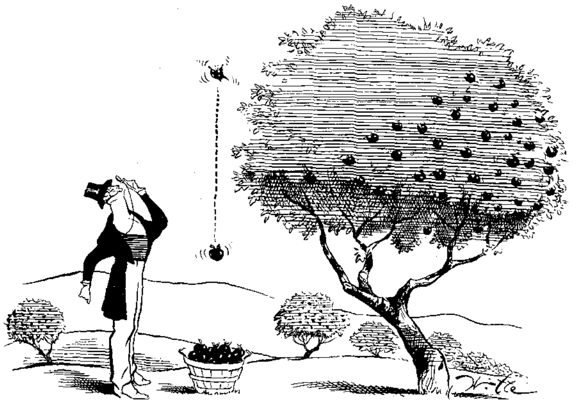


Broadway. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

The Real Live Brady Bunch—Episodes from the TV series, reënacted by the Annoyance Theatre, of Chicago. Something called "The Real Live Game Show" comes first. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

The Secret Garden—This lovely musical adaptation of the classic children's story by Frances Hodgson Burnett isn't just a kiddie show. Subtle, charming, intelligent, and wholly literary in its approach to adaptation, it manages both to be faithful to the spirit of the book and to comment on the particular moment in time that produced it. (5/13/91) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Song of Singapore—A musical with a promising concept: turn a Polish veterans' hall into a Singapore night club, circa 1941, and spill murder and mayhem onto the premises. Unfortunately, the lavish settings (by John Lee Beatty) and the musical talent (led by the winsome and versatile Donna Murphy) cannot conceal a very thin story and a host of excruciatingly bad jokes. Another problem: on a busy night the seating arrangements here can be extremely cramped. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 228-0844.)

Tartuffe—Molière's comedy, in a translation by Donald M. Frame. With Martin LaPlatney, Joanne Camp, and Frank Geraci. Directed by Shepard Sobel. (Pearl, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708. Closes Oct. 19.)

Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love—A new play by the Canadian dramatist Brad Fraser. Directed by Derek Goldby. (9/30/91) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

The Will Rogers Follies—The sets by Tony Walton, the direction and choreography by Tommy Tune, the costumes by Willa Kim, and the row upon row of Ziegfeld girls make a feast for the eyes, but the funny bone and heart are neglected. Keith Carradine makes an engaging, amusing Rogers, but that is not enough, despite Cy Coleman's pleasant score. (5/13/91) (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

York Theatre Company—The troupe opens its season with Molière's **THE MISANTHROPE**, in a translation by Richard Wilbur. (2 E. 90th St. 534-5366. Closes Oct. 20.)

Young Playwrights Festival—Presenting "Donut World," by Matthew Peterson; "Man at His Best," by Carlota Zimmerman; "Secrets to Square Dancing," by Denise Maher; and "I'm Not Stupid," by David Rodriguez. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes Oct. 20.)

LONG RUNS

CATS: Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.)... **CITY OF ANGELS:** Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)... **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turned thirty-one in May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.)... **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1991½:** This newly revised revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)... **FOREVER PLAID:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.)... **GRAND HOTEL:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)... **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)... **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.)... **ONCE ON THIS ISLAND:** An enchanting musical, set in the Caribbean, by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)... **PERFECT CRIME:** A murder mystery by Warren Manzi. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401.)... **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)... **SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION:** You're best off knowing nothing about the John Guare play other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright and the director Jerry Zaks. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. Kelly Bishop now has the lead. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

DANCE

THE political entity that we used to call the Soviet Union may be coming apart at the seams, yet this hasn't stopped Igor Moiseyev from expanding his empire. You may associate the Moiseyev Dance Company with Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian, Siberian, and Tartar folk dance. If you've seen the company, you will also surely associate it with thorough training in classic ballet of the Soviet school. But the Moiseyev's repertoire sprawls well beyond material culled from the U.S.S.R. Among its pool of more than two hundred dances—all choreographed by Mr. Moiseyev—are numbers that refer to traditions from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Japan, Sicily, Argentina, and India. At the Moiseyev's current engagement at Radio City, which runs through October 13, the program includes "Greek Suite," to the music of Mikis Teodorakis. Some of the steps and configurations will seem so characteristic of Greek dancing as to be generic—notably the chain dance for the men. Still, we have never seen such dazzling footwork for women in a Greek folk dance (by choreographers of any nationality), and the exuberant male quartets, each with its own virtuoso, lead one away from questions of national style into the realm of international mastery.

During a talk with Mr. Moiseyev the other day, we asked him about the dances at a village wedding during his recent visit to Greece, which were said to have inspired him. Answering through the interpreter Tania Jastrebov, he said, "My reply may not please you. At this particular wedding, which was on Crete, they danced the same dance over and over again. It was the atmosphere I took away—a lot of younger and older people together. It doesn't matter if they can dance." Mr. Moiseyev added that on the same visit he attended a Greek folk festival of national dances. "I made a synthesis of the most interesting dances I saw," he said. "Three months ago, I took my dance suite to Greece, and it was a great success. People sang along, even though there were no Greeks onstage."

We asked him what the nationalities of the dancers in his company were.

"Some Ukrainians, a few Armenians and Georgians," he said. "But if you want percentages, ninety per cent are Russian." He paused, smiled, and added, "You know, Russians dance Armenian dances better than Armenians do. Russians dance any dance very, very well."

Martha Graham Dance Company—In a two-week engagement. Oct. 8 at 7:30: "Appalachian Spring," "The Eyes of the Goddess" (première), "El Penitente," and "Maple Leaf Rag."... ¶ Oct. 9 at 8: "Circe," "El Penitente," "Primitive Mysteries," and "Maple Leaf Rag."... ¶ Oct. 10 at 8: "Seraphic Dialogue," "The Eyes of the Goddess," "Celebration," and "The Rite of Spring."... ¶ Oct. 11 at 8: "Embattled Garden," "Steps in the Street," "Night Journey," and "Maple Leaf Rag."... ¶ Oct. 12 at 2: "Circe," "Steps in the Street," "Night Journey," and "Appalachian Spring."... ¶ Oct. 12 at 8: "Seraphic Dialogue," "The Eyes of the Goddess," "Celebration," and "The Rite of Spring."... ¶ Oct. 13 at 2: "Embattled Garden," "Celebration," "Night Journey," and "Appalachian Spring."... ¶ Oct. 13 at 7:30: "Seraphic Dialogue," "El Penitente," "Steps in the Street," and "The Rite of Spring."... ¶ Oct. 15 at 8: "Embattled Garden," "El Penitente," "Primitive Mysteries," and "The Rite of Spring."... ¶ Oct. 16 at 8: "Seraphic Dialogue," "Embattled Garden," "Cave of the Heart," and "Maple Leaf Rag." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Through Oct. 20.)

Moiseyev Dance Company—Final performances of the engagement. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Oct. 8-11 at 8, Oct. 12 at 2 and 8, and Oct. 13 at 3.)

Dan Wagoner and Dancers—In "Fata Morgana" and the premières of "Plod," "Songs to Dance" (performed on opening night only), and "Dolly Sods After the Flood." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Oct. 8-12 at 8, and Oct. 13 at 2 and 7:30.)

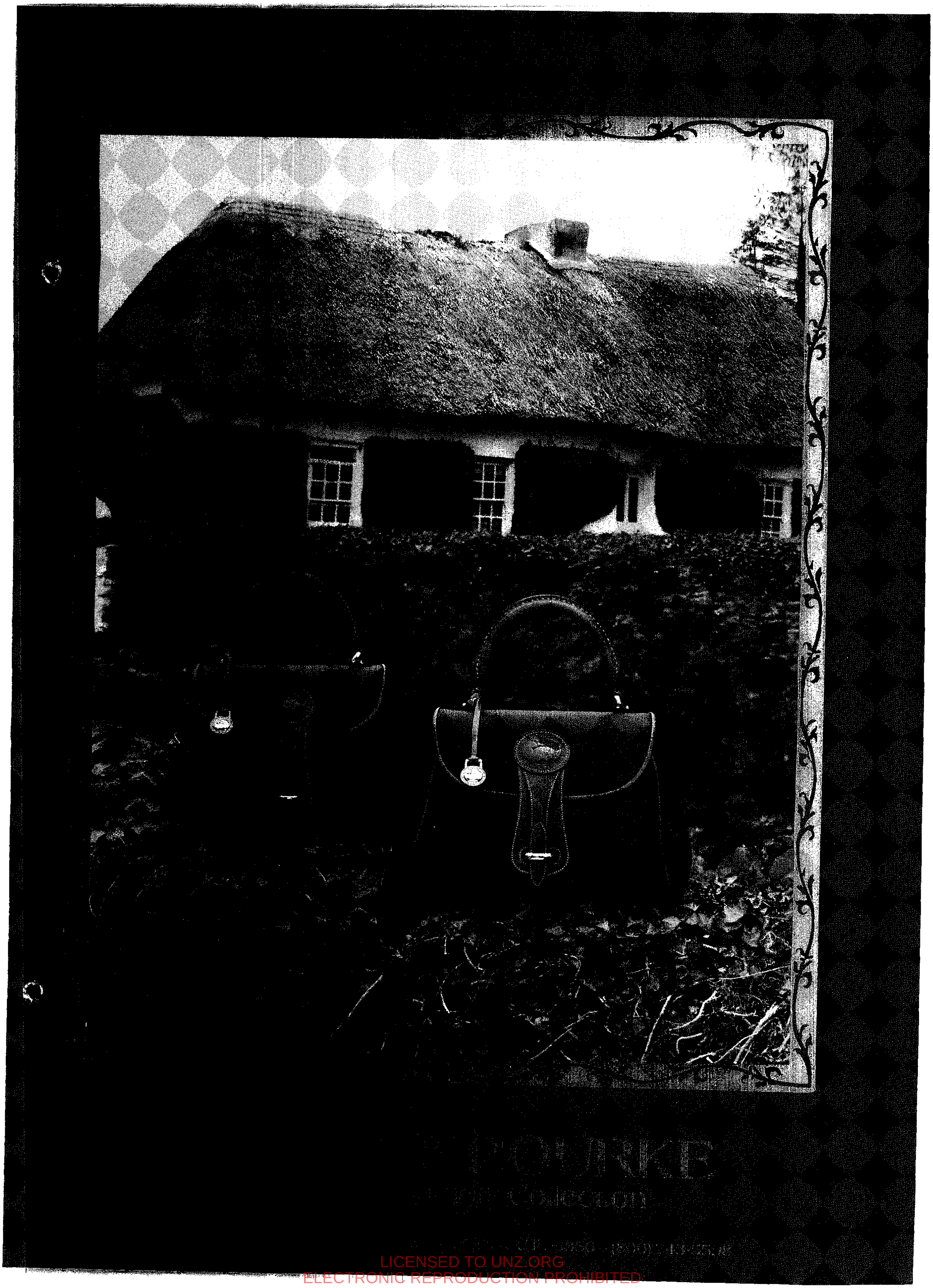
Yves Musard—Presenting "English Promenade," an hour-long solo "dance installation." (Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. Oct. 10-13 at 4. No tickets necessary.)

Lhamo Folk Opera of Tibet—Presenting three programs. Oct. 8 at 8 and Oct. 13 at 3: The Story of Sugkyi Nyima."... ¶ Oct. 11 at 8: An evening of Tibetan regional dances.... ¶ Oct. 12 at 8: "Pema Woebar." (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.)

Gigi Caciuleanu and Théâtre Chorégraphique de Rennes-Bretagne—A French company in its New York début. Oct. 10-11 at 8: "Piazza Italia."... ¶ Oct. 12-13 at 8: "Mozartissimo." (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160.)

Paco Peña's Flamenco Music and Dance Company—An eight-member troupe, from Spain. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Oct. 13 at 8.)

American Tap Dance Orchestra—Brenda Bufalino's company of twenty dancers and musicians, as well as guest artists Honi Coles, Carman Moore, and Yvette Glover. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Oct. 15-16 at 8. Through Oct. 20.)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NIGHT LIFE

Alison Moyet possesses one of the richest voices in contemporary pop, and when she latches on to the right material she can knock you out. Since emerging, in the early eighties, as the vocalist for the British synth-pop duo Yaz, and then, in 1984, going on to pursue a solo career, Ms. Moyet has had some hits and some misses. But the hits have stuck with us—Yaz's "Nobody's Diary," for example, or her rendition of Lamont Dozier's "Invisible," from her first solo album. And so we jumped at the chance to hear her perform a short acoustic set at Tatou the other night—just that voice and a guitar, no twenty-four-track production.

The event, which was a record-company party for Ms. Moyet's newly released album, "Hoodoo," was held in a small, lavish upstairs room that resembled an Indian restaurant crossed with a sheikh's harem. Ms. Moyet, looking like a veteran punk in her leather motorcycle jacket, took her place at the microphone, announced "I'm Alison Moyet, Columbia's sex bitch," and, accompanied by the guitarist Christian Marsac, proceeded to sing three cuts from the new album, as well as Jacques Brel's "Ne Me Quitte Pas." Ms. Moyet performs live infrequently, but onstage her voice has the same power and range it has on recordings—she can modulate from a breathy whisper to a clear falsetto to a raspy, full-throated belt. "Hoodoo" is her first recording in four years, and the cuts we heard sounded terrific. (She wrote or co-wrote all the songs on the album.) But her voice was almost too big for the room—like any great soul singer, she needs a band that can match her level of passion.

Lesley Gore at Rainbow & Stars

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—The woody nook known as the Oak Room is home to **SUSANNAH MC CORKLE.** The jazz-pop singer has come up with a new show since she was last seen here, in December—a tribute to Manhattan singers and songs called "Autumn in New York." Shows, which run the gamut from vaudeville to Billy Joel, are Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Thirty-year-olds in love call Mabel Godwin "a *scandal.*" Now in her seventies, she remains a singer of racy jazz numbers, a devout chatterer, a wearer of gold lamé suits, and a pianist who perks along quite nicely to the accompaniment of a snare and a standup bass. Ms. Godwin performs Fridays and Saturdays from nine-thirty. On Sundays, cornettist Lee Lorenz leads the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band, on Mondays the Grove Street Stompers do their Dixieland thing, and Tuesdays through Thursdays belong to Al Bundy. Arthur's is currently decorated for the holidays—Christmas, New Year's, Halloween, and St. Patrick's Day.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—It's everything a cabaret should be: sleek, elegant, intimate, and slighty decadent. It also offers something that other cabarets do not: tapas, which come from the Spanish restaurant adjoining the club. **RAINIE COLE,** whose show is entitled "Always, Patsy Cline," finishes up on Oct. 12. **ANNE HAMPTON CALLAWAY** begins a three-week engagement on Oct. 15. Callaway is a fine singer-pianist who can imitate Billie Holiday and Marlene Dietrich, sing an E-flat above high C, and say, without sounding immodest, "People often come up to me and ask why I'm not famous." Apart from a few requisite supper-club numbers, her set list usually includes her own songs, songs by lesser-known New York composers, and songs improvised around suggestions made by musically inclined patrons.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A blue-on-blue jazz club frequented by living legends and their followers. Guitarist **GEORGE BENSON** performs with **THE COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA** Oct. 8-13. **BILLY ECKSTINE** begins a week of performances on Oct. 15. In the mid-forties, as the leader of an influential big band, Eckstine was the Gertrude Stein of bebop, with a salon comprising a small army of soon-to-be stars. In 1947, Eckstine dissolved the group to concentrate on his singing career, which has been holding steady ever since. His sensuous, rumbling bass-baritone is one of the most distinctive voices in jazz. Music from nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Bruce Springsteen played here a great while ago and David Cassidy came through just last month—some might take that to mean that this big, airy club is going downhill, but we take it to mean that its owners have got a sense of humor. Maggie, Terre, and Suzzy Roche are, of course, **THE ROCHES.** The group, which will be here Oct. 12-13, offers slightly flip, astringent, and telling dispatches on romance, among many other things. The sisters comment on and joke about each other's stories, and make it all transcendent with ethereal, genetically tuned harmonies. **TOM SCOTT** will be here on Oct. 11. Shows at eight and eleven. Burgers, fries, and other such dining fare.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—Next door, there's a bustling, garishly lit market. Within the narrow walls of this venerable piano-and-bass preserve, however, everything is easy on the eyes and ears. The trio of bassist Larry Gales, pianist Larry Willis, and drummer Ben Riley plays Oct. 7-12; and the **FREDDY COLE** trio starts up for a week on Oct. 14. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is home to **KAREN AKERS** Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. Ms. Akers, an introspective balladeer with a refined, smoky alto, is also an actress, whose Broadway credits include "Nine" and "Grand Hotel." Her show here includes material from her recently released album, "Unchained Melody." . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans' Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—Every Sunday night, this club, usually dominated by heavy-metal fans, is ceded to a gang of Lindy Hop enthusiasts called the New York Swing Dance Society. **AL COBB'S C & J BIG BAND** takes the bandstand on Oct. 13. Music from eight to midnight.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The city's most famed rock club, a dark, narrow cave with neon-beer-sign stalactites and ancestral graffiti, is part sacred burial ground and part historic landmark, but it hasn't succumbed to nostalgia: new and used bands of every stripe continue to pass through nightly. The stomping, Farfisa-organ-driven Boston quartet known as the **LYRES,** demigods of the sixties-garage-rock scene, will be here on Oct. 12. The **FATIMA MANSIONS,** an Irish band, will perform on Oct. 15. The group's recently released début album, "Viva Dead Ponies," is an engaging if often difficult work, whose songs careen from spooky, synthesized mood music to thrash in no time, and whose lyrics cover such ground as the downfall of Ceaus[illegible]cu and Jesus as a London shopkeeper. Onstage, they should provide a rattling evening. Music from eight-thirty Sundays through Thursdays and from nine-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

Condon's, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—In the shadow of the Zeckendorf Towers sits this stucco-walled grotto, whose intimate scale makes it a fine spot for jazz. Oct. 8-13 belongs to an outfit billed as the Condon's All-Stars, which is a rather nondescript name for some very fine bebop musicians: **CLIFFORD JORDAN, JIMMY HEATH, RAY DRUMMOND, TOOTIE HEATH, KIRK LIGHTSEY, LOU DONALDSON,** and **CURTIS FULLER.** As of Oct. 15, the club belongs to **ANNIE ROSS.** Music after nine-thirty.

Dan Lynch, 221 Second Ave., at 14th St. (677-0911)—As uninviting a hole-in-the-wall as you're likely to find, this blues bar is dingy, depressingly lit, and located on a block straight out of a Gus Van Sant movie. In the world of blues, however, this spells authenticity, and the bands here are often worth the trouble. Music from ten nightly.

Delta 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—Feels like home—not your home, but somebody's. The restaurant-and-bar is a giant junk shop of a place, where the walls are filled with redneck iconography, where the waiters and waitresses scurry around with such things as chicken-fried steak, and where some jumpy young band or other is always stomping around on stage.

Diva, 306 E. 81st St. (650-1928)—A newly hatched restaurant and piano bar. It's a modest-sized, brick-walled room that offers Italian fare and, Tuesdays through Saturdays, the musings of pianist **CHARLES DE FOREST.** Mondays belong to **RICHARD RODNEY BENNETT.** Music from eight-thirty. Closed Sundays.

Eighty Eight's, 228 W. 10th St. (924-0088)—The upstairs of this Village night spot is currently hosting the voluble **SYLVIA SYMS** in a show of favorite numbers from her long and distinguished career in the clubs. A graduate of the Carol Channing School of Enunciation, Ms. Syms runs little risk of being tapped for a "Hooked on Phonics" commercial, and at this point you'd need a yardstick to measure her vibrato. But the spirit and the pacing remain right on target, and the intimate scale of Eighty Eight's would seem custom-made for her expressive style. Pianist Fred Hersch and tenor-sax player Loren Schoenberg assist. Shows Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through the iffy-looking side door, down the famous fun-house tunnel that's lined with mirrors and corrugated tin, and down a short flight of stairs, you'll find this softly lit, low-ceilinged jazz preserve. **BUSTER WILLIAMS'** quintet is in action Oct. [illegible]-13; a group led by **STANLEY TURRENTINE** begins work on Oct. 15. Turrentine, a tenor saxophonist, came up via Ray Charles' band and the Max Roach quintet, eventually landing at Blue Note Records, where he put out a series of well-regarded albums in the nineteen-sixties. Turrentine's style has echoes of Coleman Hawkins and Sonny Rollins, among others, and is shot through with the blues. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio (except on Oct. 7, when the club will be closed). Music from eight. Dining.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. The musicians set up in the dining room, a clubby-looking space with leather banquettes and well-preserved collectibles: Sunday *Herald Tribune* covers, First World War posters, Hirschfeld cartoons. Up front, at the bar, you can keep your eye on the musicians, the conversationalists, and sidewalk life. Music from about nine-thirty.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A frat house for the avant-garde. In some ways, the Knitting Factory doesn't really belong in New York: the cover charge is too reasonable, the management is too laid back, the audiences are too polite. It's a slice of post-collegiate counterculture that somehow landed on Houston Street. A few current highlights: guitarist **MARC RIBOT'S BRUTAL ATAVISM ORCHESTRA** on Oct. 10; the **ROOTLESS COSMOPOLITANS** on Oct. 11; **ZAHAR** on Oct. 12; **DRUNKEN BOAT** on Oct. 15. Music after nine.

Lauterbach's Brooklyn Beat, 335 Prospect Ave., at Sixth Ave., Brooklyn. (1-718 788-91[illegible]0)—A grungy but well-intentioned watering hole devoted to homegrown Brooklyn bands. The emphasis here is on exposed cement, although one wall is decorated with Polaroids—"St. Patty's 1986" (people in green hats and leis), "New Year's 1988-89" (people in red hats and leis). Lauterbach's microwave menu includes shepherd's pie and chicken parmigiana, but the musical menu is almost always a better bet.

Ludlow Street Café, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—Every Monday night at this modest below-stairs room you can hear **BEAT RODEO,** a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mix of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, and various found pop numbers. Sets from eleven.

Manny's Car Wash, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—A bright spot on the little-heralded Upper East Side club scene. Don't go expecting to be sprayed with soapy water and massaged by large brushes: the fluorescent sign outside is the only car-wash reference. Inside, the place looks like an adman's idea of a blues bar. The Virginia-born **HOLMES BROTHERS,** who appear here on Oct. 14, toiled in obscurity until a few years ago, when critics and record-company scouts began to take notice of their propulsive blend of backwater blues, roadhouse R. & B., and gospel. The brothers have several decades of club experience under their belts, and their shows are muscular, feet-stirring displays of solid musicianship. Sets from nine-fifteen, except Sundays, when they begin at eight-thirty.

Marquee, 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—If the hero of a movie walked down this creepy, semi-deserted block, the audience would be throwing things at the screen and shouting, "Turn back! Turn back!" Thanks to this fine alternative-music club, though, there's usually a fairly steady flow of traffic through these parts. This week, intrepid young New Yorkers will be coming to see the **MIGHTY LEMON DROPS** and **SISTER DOUBLE HAPPINESS,** both of whom will perform on Oct. 10. The latter is the band to watch: they're a San Francisco-based outfit that mixes up blues, punk, and country, and they recently released their major-label début, "Heart and Mind."

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A good sound system, cheap drinks, and a regular-guy atmosphere make this restaurant-bar, home of the Hoboken Sound and of the phrase "jangly guitars," a popular hangout for musicians and their followers. The **FATIMA MANSIONS** (see listing for CBGB) perform on Oct. 13. Shows usually start at ten on Thursdays, eleven on Fridays and Saturdays.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—In this midtown restaurant for the tasselled-loafers set, Stan Freeman is offering a one-man musical show depicting the life of Oscar Levant. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at eight-thirty, Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven, and Sundays at three.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A moondust-in-your-hair cabaret with an ear-popping express elevator and tables scattered with plastic diamonds and sapphires. **LESLEY GORE,** whose 1963 hit "It's My Party" made her a very, very famous sixteen-year-old, recently began a monthlong engagement here. Gore has not appeared in New York for over a decade and her performances are sure to include the aforementioned number, as well as the hits "Judy's Turn to Cry" and "You Don't Own Me." Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—It may look like a plain old steakhouse, and the photos on the walls may look like Sardi's leftovers, but in the back room you'll find swing bands, Dixieland combos, and couples sprung from the legacy of Fred and Ginger. **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS** do their prewar-jazz-and-blues thing here on Tuesdays and Fridays. Show times vary.

Russian Tea Room, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Known for, among countless other things, a scene in "Manhattan" in which Woody Allen tries to teach his young son how to "score." Last fall, after a long slumber, the Tea Room's small, red-gold-and-green cabaret reopened with a series of Sunday-night performances. **ALAN BERGMAN** and **SANDY STEWART** come in on Oct. 13. Shows at eight and ten-thirty. Dining and, of course, drinking.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—This former luncheonette has a tropical motif—straw huts, bamboo, a fake palm tree, a mosaic of gourds—and one of the city's more international booking policies: Brazil, Africa, and the Caribbean are just a few of the places explored. **KENIA,** a Brazilian jazz singer, is here on Oct. 8; the reggae outfit **MUTABARUKA & MIGHTY DIAMONDS** claims Oct. 9-10. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays.

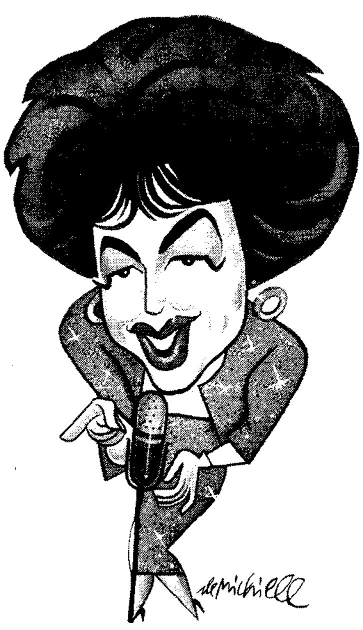
Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. Pianist **MAL WALDRON,** who recently released a provocative album with Steve Lacy, leads a quintet here through Oct. 13; there's a mini "Jazz from Sweden" festival Oct. 9-10; and the **TERUMASA HINO** quartet starts up on Oct. 15. The electrified big band of the trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

Tramps, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Located on a Chelsea block that has become an urban Disneyland (a pool hall, an indoor miniature-golf course, a trendy all-night diner, Limelight around the corner), this roller-rink-size bar-and-restaurant is a little slicker and a lot roomier than the original Tramps, but the emphasis on solid rock and blues remains. Soul singer **OTIS CLAY** is here on Oct. 11. Music from eight on weeknights, and from eight-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This windowless, wedge-shaped basement has an illustrious history that embraces everyone from Judy Holliday to Lenny Bruce, from Pete Seeger and Leadbelly to Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins. The décor is homey and a little faded, like an attic full of memorabilia. The **JAY HOGGARD** quartet is here through Oct. 13, and the **JACKIE MC LEAN** quintet starts up on Oct. 15. Mondays are reserved for the **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA.** Music after nine-thirty.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Two floors of no-nuke veggie entertainment and consciousness-raising. Listen to bands play in the Summer of Love-muralled back room; buy a tie-dyed T-shirt at the Volkswagen-bus curio shop; catch up on current events at the bulletin board and community calendar. Or, if you'd rather just be mellow, crash out in the basement hippie love pad. Music at ten.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. The piano-drums-and-bass trio of **MIKE LE DONNE, KENNY WASHINGTON,** and **PETER WASHINGTON** performs Oct. 7-12. Pianist **JANE JARVIS** and bassist **MILT HINTON** begin a two-week stretch on Oct. 14. Music from eight every night.



Rainie Cole at the Ballroom

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

Two fêtes occurred back-to-back on the same night, with almost the same guest list—the earlier one a coming-out-in-the-*Post* party for columnist Billy Norwich and the later one a cocktailia for designer/professional scamp Franco Moschino. Both had quirky settings: Norwich bowed blushingly in the Royalton Hotel's lobby; Moschino's legions took over the main floor of Saks. Photogs and pretty clothes were blindsiding. Food and drink were all around. The events were so close, the double invitees walked from one to the other without ever complaining about footwear.

Then why did the first party go boom and the second go bust? It wasn't as if the Royalton were the ideal location. The planners didn't even use the upholstery-filled lounge area, just the skinny, endless entrance runway. A couple who were trying to check in with seven pieces of unmatched luggage reminded us of the bewitched terror we once saw on the faces of some low-totem conventioneers when they walked into the wrong ballroom of the Holiday Inn on 42nd Street and found themselves at an est marathon weekend in the middle of its second day. While the Royalton squeezed people together, Saks diasporized them, trying to combine a San Gennaro festival, a one-ring circus, and a Samuel Bronston epic. Guests scurried Alice-like around the maze of counters in search of lost friends who had promised to get them drinks. The live entertainment, which was competing against taped music and squelched conversation, could only be seen from a center corridor. Patti LaBelle, assuming all New York, New York must have the acoustics of Radio City, caused three official greeters to cover their ears.

In the end, the first party knew what the second one didn't: that the best events in this town are those that concentrate on what New Yorkers find most fascinating—each other. Everything else merely pleases the caterer.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Next Wave Festival—Oct. 8-9 at 7, Oct. 11-12 at 8, and Oct. 13 at 3: "Bandoneon," an evening-length work by Pina Bausch. . . . ¶ Oct. 9 at 7, Oct. 10-12 at 8, and Oct. 13 at 3: "Maturando," a series of vignettes, with puppets, by the Brazilian troupe Grupo Contadores de Estorias. . . . ¶ Oct. 15 at 7 and Oct. 16 at 8: Guillermo Gómez-Peña in his new performance piece. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. The festival continues through Dec. 7.)

P.S. 122—Oct. 10-13 at 8: William Pope L. in "The Aunt Jenny Chronicles/Journey to Incontinence." . . . ¶ Oct. 10-13 at 9: Edwina Lee Tyler. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

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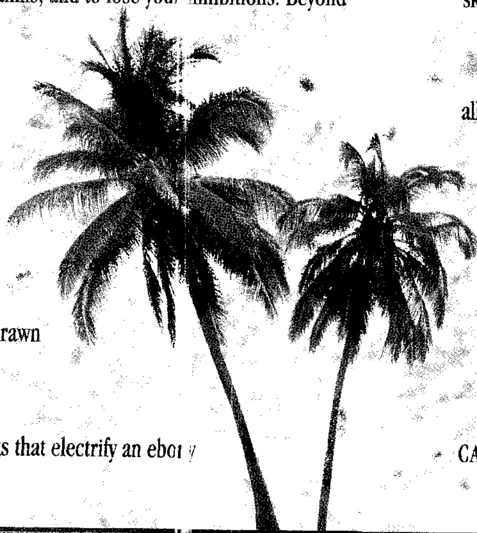

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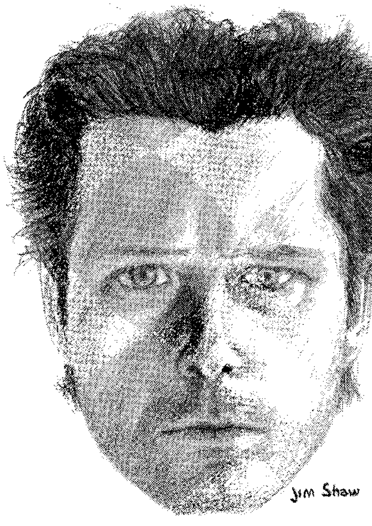
THE DIFFERENCE IS NIGHT AND DAY



Self-portrait by Jim Shaw

ART

EMPTY storefronts and vacant galleries have been gaping at us all over town this year, but enterprise, we've heard, loves a vacuum almost as much as it loves a flow of cash. So we waited eagerly all summer for the reappearance, after a long sabbatical, of one of our favorite entrepreneurial spirits: that rakish, fly-by-night kind of *Geist* that can wrap itself around a month-to-month lease. Well, the leaves are falling and we haven't been disappointed. Furthermore, the first big makeshift art event of the season has taken place not in downtown precincts but in the recently abandoned Chemical Bank branch on the northwest corner of the Faubourg St. Madisonapoleone at 59th Street. There, in plain view, the normally buttoned-up André Emmerich gallery seems to be squatting!

It's a happy sight. After a show of Al Held's "Italian Watercolors" had already opened at Emmerich's proper venue (41 East 57th Street), where it will enjoy a conventional run, an enormous new painted triptych by the artist was spirited into the gutted and hangarlike Chemical space. The suite, called "Harry, If I Told You, Would You Know?," is dedicated to Held's father; the title seems a private note with a big twanging sound in these pioneer-style, retro-Futurist surroundings. Thoroughly at home on raw concrete and enhanced by the odd dangling wire, Held's boldly chromatic, hard-edged, clean-surfaced work looks like some sort of gas-guzzling, high-octane geometry. "Harry" will stay put for an unspecified length of time. "About five weeks, maybe longer," according to a young gallery employee, who was grinning gleefully from his makeshift table outpost. He told us that he had been planning to rush downtown after work to catch the end of Gilbert & George's last twentieth-anniversary performance of "The Singing Sculpture." That performance, then and now, took place on a similar table.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Seurat." A centenary exhibition of more than two hundred paintings and drawings by the Pointillist. . . . ¶ "Neo-Impressionism: The Friends and Followers of Georges Seurat," best taken as a kind of appetizer before the main course, consists of eighty-eight paintings, drawings, and watercolors by Paul Signac, Camille Pissarro, Henri Matisse, and many others. . . . ¶ The exhibition of the Annenberg Collection begins with some exquisite small works by Fantin-Latour, followed by two rooms, devoted to Monet, van Gogh, Gauguin, and Cézanne, that include some of the collection's finest works, such as Monet's "Poppy Field, Argenteuil" (1875), Gauguin's "The Siesta" (1892-94), and Cézanne's "The House with the Cracked Walls" (1892-94). Farther on are some very good early-twentieth-century works, including Picasso's haunting "At the Lapin Agile" (1905), an important but somewhat overwrought Vuillard, a beautiful Matisse, and a very pretty Bonnard. Through Oct. 13. . . . **Note:** The museum's roof garden, planted with nine sculptures by Rodin, is open when the weather permits. Through Oct. 27. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Pleasures and Terrors of Domestic Comfort" explores the contemporary photographer's supposed preoccupation with the life of the home in more than a hundred and fifty works by Nan Goldin, William Eggleston, Cindy Sherman, Tina Barney, and others. Through Dec. 31. . . . ¶ Guillermo Kuitca's installation is not an installation in the currently fashionable sense, which is refreshing—especially given the microclimate of the "Projects" room. Maps—of the area around Odessa, for example, where Kuitca's grandparents were from—have been a frequent refrain in the artist's work, along with the recurring blueprint of a four-room house. On view, for instance, are three of Kuitca's paintings with the house-plan motif, one of which appears to be weeping. There is also a group of five foreshortened, freestanding cots, with maps painted on their mattresses. What is most engaging about Kuitca is his tentative quality. His work is emotionally delicate even when confessional, and when it's political it remains personal as well. Through Oct. 29. . . . ¶ An exhibition of models, drawings, and photographs illuminates the work of the Japanese architect Tadao Ando. Through Dec. 31. . . . ¶ Forty helmets and masks made in the twentieth century. Through Nov. 19. . . . ¶ A small show of videotapes made with inexpensive video equipment by such artists as William Wegman, Linda Montano, George Kuchar, and Sadie Benning. Through Nov. 10. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until early 1992.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A tableau of four late sculptures designed by Scott Burton (1939-89). Through Dec. 8. . . . ¶ Among the punchiest and freshest-looking paintings in "American Life in American Art" are Paul Cadmus's flamboyantly tawdry "Sailors and Floosies" (1938), Grant Wood's subtly colored triptych "Study for Breaking the Prairie" (1935-39), and George Tooker's creepy and hilarious "The Subway" (1950). Second floor through Nov. 10; third floor through Jan. 5. . . . ¶ A retrospective of John Baldessari's work that has been organized into eight loosely chronological rooms. Through Oct. 20. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A retrospective of the career of Sigmar Polke, from his early "Capitalist Realist" paintings to his latest "alchemical" combines. Starts Oct. 11. . . . ¶ "Objects of Myth and Memory," an exhibition of more than two hundred and fifty Native American objects. The show is organized by geographical region—Southwest, Great Plains, California, the Pacific Northwest—and features works by the Pomo, Navajo, and Zuni tribes, among others. Through Dec. 29. . . . ¶ A companion show of contemporary Native American works, including ceramics, elk-horn carvings, and Pomo baskets. . . . ¶ A thirty-foot-long platform of forged-iron sculptures is the fifteenth installment in Alain Kirili's "Commandment" series. . . . ¶ "Quattrocento," a small exhibition of a few dozen early-Renaissance panel paintings from Italy, shows off another of the many fine corners of the museum's vast collection. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—In a "living exhibit," four monks from Tibet will demonstrate over the course of five weeks their ancient craft of doll-making. This involves clay modelling, painting, appliqué, and tailoring, and about fifteen or twenty elaborate dolls will be made. Through Nov. 8. . . . ¶ A show of photographs by Heinrich Harrer taken in Tibet during the last few years before the Chinese invasion in 1951. Through Nov. 8. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—A show, of sixty ukiyo-e prints and books, whose purpose is to explore the relationship between the works, the artists, and censorship in Tokugawa Japan (1615-1868). Starts Oct. 9. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Friday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—Sixty-eight early ukiyo-e prints and paintings. Through Nov. 24. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

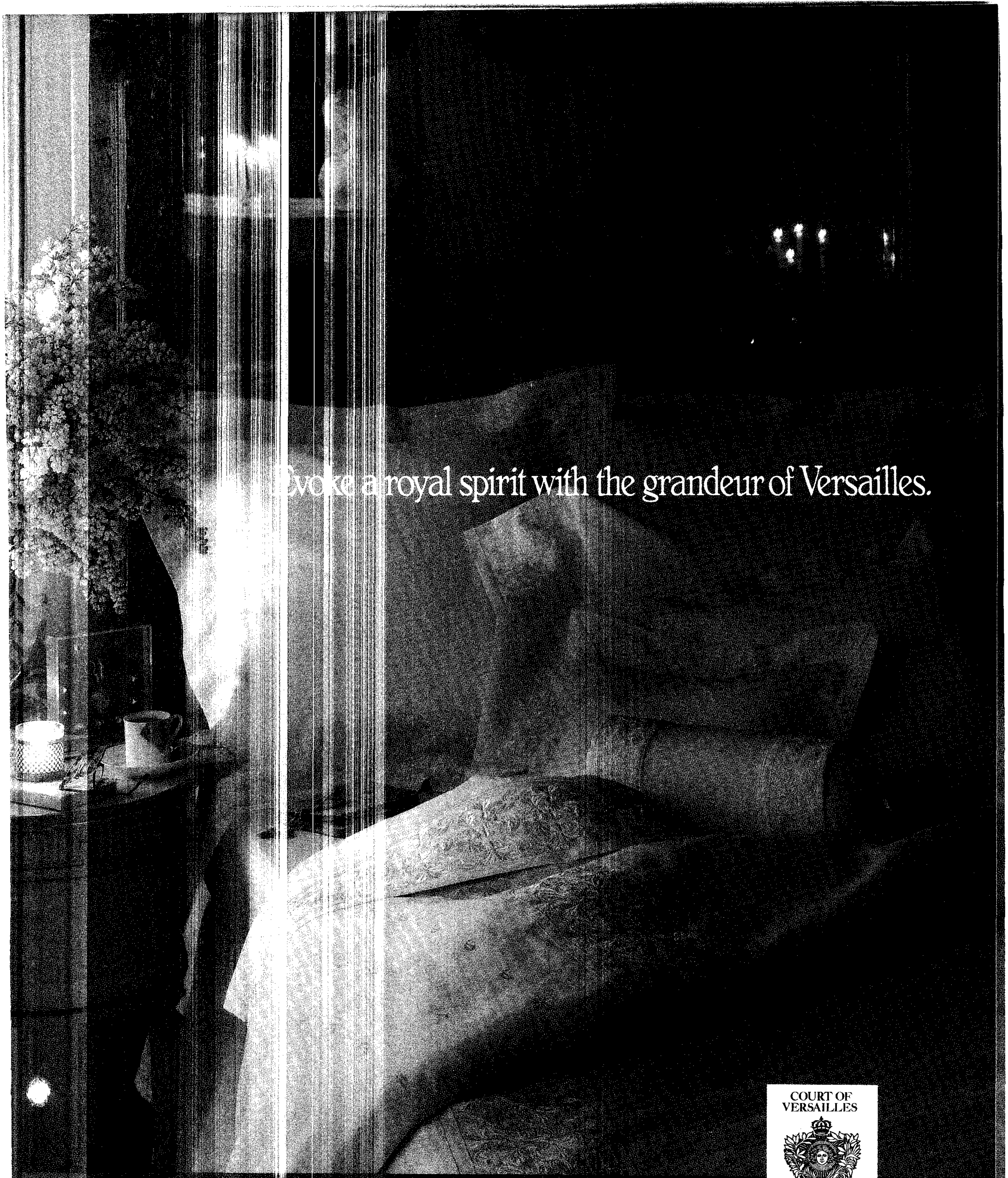
Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—The library has reopened with greatly improved interior spaces. The Morgan House (at 37th and Madison) has been purchased and a glass-enclosed garden court constructed to connect the two buildings. The permanent collection is now given three new gallery spaces and is shown off in "Masterpieces of the Morgan Library." (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—The show "Swiss Folk Art" consists of a hundred and ninety works, including many American works inspired by Swiss design. (Open daily, 11:30 to 7:30.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—"The Interrupted Life." There are only a few good works of art in this show about death, most notably two silk-screen paintings made by Andy Warhol almost thirty years ago. Warhol's montage of four grieving Jackie Kennedys and his electric chair have become icons of America's obsession with celebrity and of its equation of justice with death. Much of the remaining work in this ambitious but somewhat misdirected display is concerned with a sensationalistic view of death—cadavers, autopsies, and the like. Apart from the Warhols, the most affecting works are the documentary ones—anonymous nineteenth-century family photographs of dead loved ones, many posed as if they were alive, and a riveting five-hour-plus documentary by Frederick Wiseman, in which hospital workers discuss death from a variety of medical angles. Although the show does feature other compelling moments, including works by Sarah Charlesworth and Adam Fuss, in general the more arty the works try to be, the more forthright, silly, and narcissistic they are. The most existential art of the past several decades has been nonrepresentational, but nowhere here is abstraction explored. The catalogue contains a number of what sound like interesting essays, but unfortunately, owing to its design, it is nearly unreadable. Through Dec. 29. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"While They Fought: The Homefront in New York City" includes many posters, photographs (one shows Kate S[illegible]n surrounded by sailors), and artifacts from the Second World War. Starts Oct. 9. . . . ¶ Forty watercolors of New York and New Jersey landscapes by William Rickarby Miller (1818-1893). Through Nov. 17. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—A hundred and fifty German Expressionist prints and books—mostly from the period 1910 to 1930—by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Käthe Kollwitz, Wassily Kandinsky, George Grosz, and others. (Third Floor Gallery. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 7:30; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.). . . ¶ "Documents of Dissent," a show of books, posters, handbills, and journals from China, Tibet, the Soviet Union, the United States, and other countries. Included are the first English translation of "The Gulag Ar-



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

chipelago,” the “Black Book of Polish Censorship,” and posters by the collaborative group Guerrilla Girls. (Edna Barnes Salomon Room. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

Queens Museum of Art, Flushing Meadow Park—Fifty photographs, by Reginald Marsh, that depict New York’s subways and Coney Island, and that were used by the artist as studies for his better-known paintings and drawings. Through Nov. 10. . . . ¶ A small show of paintings and works on paper—all of them diptychs—by Candida Alvarez. Through Oct. 12. . . . ¶ Christian Boltanski’s mixed-media installation “Les Bougies” (“The Candles”) incorporates metal, light fixtures, and mounted photographs. Through Nov. 2. . . . ¶ “Sylvia Plachy’s Unguided Tour” is a collection of a hundred and twenty-five of the photographer’s works. Through Nov. 2. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Sixty-three narrative canvases painted by Jacob Lawrence between 1938 and 1940. Through Nov. 10. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Short List—francesco clemente, Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (through Nov. 16); **alan feltus,** Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. (through Oct. 26); **nancy fried,** Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. (through Nov. 2); **nancy graves,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (through Oct. 31); **don van vliet,** Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (through Oct. 26); **ignacio zuloaga,** Wildenstein, 19 E. 64th St. (a benefit, admission three dollars; open Mondays, closed Saturdays; through Nov. 8).

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Rebecca Horn—“High Moon” is Horn’s latest “painting machine,” and it’s a Freudian field day, consisting as it does of a poem about fused love; a pair of red-liquid-filled breasts feeding their fluid into a pair of Winchester rifles; two mechanical lightning bolts, one striking an architectural beam, the other, one of the breasts; and a blood-colored stream, footed by what has become Horn’s signature of sorts: a circular saw, which cuts into the base of the gallery’s wall. The rifles revolve slowly, at times pointing at viewers, until, when they’re aiming at each other, they release quick spurts of their red-liquid ammunition. There are obviously many levels of interpretation here. Through Oct. 19. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Short List—robert barry, Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 12); **leonard baskin,** Midtown-Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Oct. 26); **romare bearden,** ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 26); **pol bury,** Herstand, 24 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 9); **elaine de kooning,** Washburn, 41 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 2); **philip guston,** McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Oct. 19); **jean helion,** Adler, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 26); **alex katz,** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 2); **marc lambrechts,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 19); **john opper** and **max beckmann,** Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Oct. 26); **rebecca purdum,** Tilton, 24 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 16); **wallace putnam,** Ross, 50 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 9); **matthew radford,** Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 29); **man ray,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 12); **mark tobey,** Daverio, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 26); **michael young,** Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 2); **marguerite zorach,** Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Nov. 2).

GALLERIES—SoHo

Mel Bochner—Bochner holds a place in the short history of conceptualism for presenting art as a series of simple mathematical propositions that trigger philosophical, theoretical, and aesthetic thoughts. This exhibition, a re-creation of a 1969 work, consists of a straight strip of black tape running around the perimeter of the gallery and marked in thirty-six-inch segments. It is being presented as “a pivotal point in the history of contemporary art” for its taking “the conceptual program of making art about the context to its radical conclusion by implicating the actual space and architecture within which the art work resides.” Through Oct. 19. (SteinGladstone, 99 Wooster St.)

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ULTRAMONTANE

The Lhamo Folk Opera of Tibet, an expatriate company based in India, last performed in the United States sixteen years ago. At that time it presented a seven- or eight-minute piece called “The Dance of the Sacred Stag,” which became engraved in the memory of everyone who saw it—especially the moment when the stag kneels and, with its hoof-hands, strews to the wind bits and pieces of what was once an effigy of Evil. The image of that little creature (the stag is played by a youth) seemed unearthly, charming, and pure of heart, like popular notions of Tibet itself.

This month, the Lhamo Folk Opera returns to New York (October 8 and Oct. 11-13, at Symphony Space), with the “Sacred Stag” as well as a couple of operas. Its rare visit is part of a yearlong constellation of cultural events that have been organized to focus world attention on Tibet’s political domination by China. This month’s events include a weekend (October 11-13) of symposia and films at the Asia Society, with a talk by the Dalai Lama in person; a film festival, from October 12 to November 3, at various places around town, organized by the actor Richard Gere; and a monthlong program of exhibits and performances at the American Museum of Natural History. Among these are a “living exhibit” of four Tibetan monks who will demonstrate the craft of doll-making, and, apparently for the first time ever in public, an evening (October 16) of ritual masked dances featuring black hats, nectar, and wrathful deities.

Mel Chin—This three-part, bow-tie-shaped installation—consisting of a mandalic painting, a rug, and a video work—is more interesting in conception than in execution. The triangular rug, which is suspended from the ceiling, has a pattern derived from photographic images of meteorological phenomena; it is a study for a sixty-six-foot-square “State of Heaven” rug intended to symbolize the deteriorating ozone layer. The problem with the installation—or the benefit, depending on how you view these things—is that the finely crafted rug doesn’t suggest meteorological patterns as much as it does ocean waves. But it *is* a beautiful object. Through Oct. 26. (Storefront for Art and Architecture, 97 Kenmare St. Opens at noon.)

Piero Gilardi—“Inveronimile” (“Beyond Belief”). After a twelve-year absence, this practitioner of Arte Povera is back with a wonderfully weird, interactive light-sound-and-smoke installation that takes place in a kinetic grape arbor. In a carefully orchestrated twelve-minute program, the arbor goes through a full cycle—from night to day and back again—during which viewers can control light and sound effects by pressing lit leaves. At various points in the cycle armlike vines do an undulating wiggle and the tops of the trees spin around frenetically, opening to reveal the grapes within. Through Oct. 12. (Sperone Westwater, 121 Greene St.)

Nancy Haynes—These are simply some of the most beautiful nonobjective paintings around. Ambitious yet modest, they seem to be based on nature, though their inky blackness could just as well be about death. All these works, both small and large, have a keen sense of focus, which is often lacking in showier, more celebrated abstractions. Through Oct. 26. (Good, 532 Broadway.)

Jene Highstein—This accomplished post-minimal sculptor works out the forms of his pieces in large-scale drawings, five of which are the subject of this show. Much of Highstein’s sensitivity to mass is reflected in these renderings of heavy, black forms, which sit uncomfortably on paper, as if they can’t wait to breathe in three-dimensional space. Through Nov. 9. (Klein, 594 Broadway.)

Jonathan Lasker—Lasker is a painter who hedges his bets: his works are both a critique of painting and successful attempts to do it well. The subject is always a squiggly doodle, which he meticulously duplicates on a large scale, frames, and places against a sea of other doodles. The subject is sometimes reminiscent of a tulip or a recumbent nude but usually it’s just a gigantic squiggle—a symbol of gesture. Through Nov. 2. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Jim Shaw—A show of the artist’s extensive collection of paintings bought in thrift stores—everything from portraits of clowns and pets to a depiction of a roll of bathroom tissue. Shaw doesn’t attempt to encyclopedically document “amateur” painting—he has an overriding taste for the surreal. Although he doesn’t seem to be suggesting that these works are on a par with those of “professionals,” many of the paintings do passively indict the quality of much art deemed valuable. There are hours of pleasure here, and the artist’s idiosyncratic taste might offer a few lessons to the collector who is interested only in the best by the greatest. Through Oct. 12. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

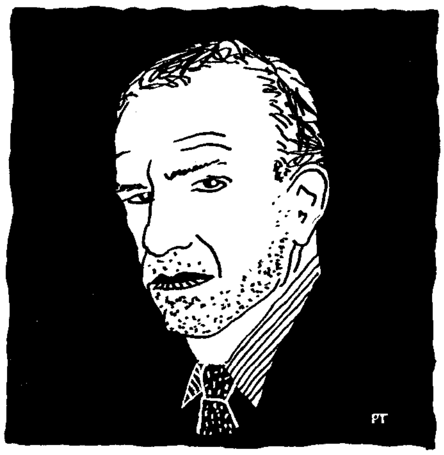
Jenny Watson—Crudely drawn paintings—of a horse; a woman, usually in a demeaning role of submission; or both—to which horsehair or an occasional narrative caption has been attached. At times Watson plays a perceptualist’s game: in one canvas the hair is a girl’s ponytail; in another an identical hairpiece is, quite literally, a pony’s tail. But the hair is seldom more than a gimmick, with one notable exception: in a long, wide painting of a reclining woman who looks as if she’s entombed. Through Nov. 7. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

“Selections/Fall ’91”—This show breathes new life into the Drawing Center’s tired series of annual shows of emerging artists. The most interesting works are a group of satiric drawings by Megan Williams that take on Futurism, Surrealism, and the assertion of male prowess through art (one is titled “Ball Buster” and brings particularly comic meaning to the phrase), and fourteen “self-portraits” of the artist Robert Blanchon, drawn by sidewalk portraitists. Largely owing to their lack of skill, their portraits are so different from each other’s that even if you passed the sitter on the street you wouldn’t recognize him. Most of the works reveal nothing of Blanchon’s character, except for a few of the somewhat more skillfully drawn ones in which the artist/subject stares directly at the viewer. Through Oct. 26. (35 Wooster St. Open Wednesdays until 8.)

Group Shows—At **cooper,** 155 Wooster St.: A peculiar, loosely thematic assortment of notables, including John Baldessari, Ronald Jones, and On Kawara, as well as Burt Barr (a video starring a black Labrador and the painter Stephen Mueller), Zoe Leonard (photographs of pickled medical oddities, taken in a museum in France), and a rather listless collaboration between Sherrie Levine

ART–Cont'd

and Robert Gober. Everything seems to have something to do with either haphazardness or the grotesque. Through Oct. 19. . . . **GERMANS VAN ECK,** 420 West Broadway: David Kezur makes tight little wall sculptures that evoke Constructivism and jeweler's tools; they are made of wood and screws, along with such items as gherkins, pearl onions, and vodka. They're as zippy as they sound, and a bit overclever. Alix Pearlstein's genuinely witty works suggest the early work of Richard Tuttle: a most ephemeral comedy of manners. For instance, there is a wall drawing shaped like a Richard Long target but whose marks are small circular bandages, and a floor sculpture consisting of two clear plastic sacks full of water, like silicone implant bags gone oceanic. Alan Rath's anthropomorphic video sculptures lurk on the floor here; they evoke a whole history of Pop-sexual obsessions—Tom Wesselman's, Norman Mailer's. Through Oct. 12. . . . **SHAFRAZI,** 130 Prince St.: New works by four young artists. David Carrino's paintings are masterfully constructed combinations of Islamic calligraphy, fragments of Victorian letters, Greek script, and drawings and tattoo-like markings. The high-shine lacquer surfaces are extensively rumpled, as if they were badly stretched and stored a century ago—an effect that counteracts the artist's tendency toward the precious. Suzan Etkin has lined a room with mirrors and barres. Three days a week a ballet class will be conducted here, with the intention of drawing a parallel between the dancer-and-mirror and the self-scrutiny of art-making. Perhaps more interesting, though, is the presentation of the gallery as a classroom—a place in which to view a process of profound narcissism. Through Oct. 19.



Alex Katz by Paul Taylor

SHORT LIST—**VINCENT ARCILESI,** Z Gallery, 382 West Broadway (opens Sundays at 1, through Oct. 25); **DOTTY ATTIE,** P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway (through Oct. 26); **BERNARD CHAET,** Pearl, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 12); **JIM DINE,** Pace, 142 Greene St. (through Oct. 26); **STEVE GIANAKOS,** Toll, 146 Greene St. (through Oct. 26); **HARRY KRAMER,** Cowles, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 26); **ALFRED LESLIE,** Flynn, 113 Crosby St. (through Dec. 21); **ARNOLD MESCHES,** Donahue, 560 Broadway (through Oct. 12); **MEL RAMOS,** Meisel, 141 Prince St. (through Oct. 26); **JULIAO SARMENTO,** Louver, 130 Prince St. (through Oct. 12); **NANCY SHAVER,** Marcus, 578 Broadway (through Oct. 12); **ROBERT SMITHSON** and **ADRIAN PIPER,** Weber, 142 Greene St. (through Oct. 26); **JESÚS RAFAEL SOTO,** Humphrey, 594 Broadway (through Nov. 9); **URSULA VON RYDINGSVÄRD,** Lorence-Monk, 578 Broadway (through Oct. 26).

OTHER GALLERIES

SHORT LIST—**RALPH HUMPHREY,** Hunter College Gallery, Lexington Ave. at 68th St. (opens at 1, closed Saturdays, through Oct. 26); **GRETCHEN DOW SIMPSON,** Ryan, 452 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. (through Oct. 12); **ROBERT SMITHSON,** Schermerhorn Hall, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. (opens at 1 Wednesdays through Saturdays, through Oct. 26); **LAWRENCE WEINER** and **DAN GRAHAM,** Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. (opens at noon Thursdays through Sundays, through Feb. 2).

PHOTOGRAPHY

AROUND this time last year, we had the good fortune to witness a sunset on a Saturday night at the Colosseum, in Rome. To make matters even more romantic, as we walked around this soulful place, following a man who was bringing supper to the cats who populate the dark spots of the ruin, we kept coming across wedding parties, each accompanied by a photographer. The whites of the brides' dresses, the green of the grass, and the reds and browns of the site stood out from everything else around. In such scenes, the mystery of the future bled into the mystery of the past. A similar tactile combination of history and the present can be found in color photographs by Joel Sternfeld of the Roman countryside, which are on view at the Pace-MacGill gallery (32 East 57th Street; through October 19).

Sternfeld's use of color and so-called modern ugliness gives his pictures their living quality, and it is a pleasure to see an artist who successfully avoids the nostalgia trap. Sometimes Sternfeld makes too much of a bright color that seems to have caught his fancy, and then his photographs lose their graceful balancing of the ages. But there are also pictures in this vein that are especially fine. For example, his photograph of a group of women schmoozing beside a piece of ancient wall, with a modern housing development in the background, is one of the most uncontrived pictures about contemporary community that we have seen. In this image, too, a primal color juices up the shot, slightly. It's the yellow of what we take to be a dog's bowl. The dog who sits on the lap of one of the ladies is, presumably, the bowl's owner. The animal looks out toward the viewer, ears cocked—reminding us that we will never know what these women are saying.

"PICTURES OF PEACE"—A travelling exhibition of works by thirty-six contemporary photographers, including Lynn Davis, Jan Groover, Dennis Hopper, Sheila Metzner, and Bruce Weber. Through Oct. 31. (Fashion Institute of Technology, 227 W. 27th St.)

"PARIS IN THE THIRTIES: SURREALISM AND THE BOOK"—A celebration of personal visions that brings together a variety of mediums, including drawings, collages, objects, prints, and photographs. Of all the work on display, Hans Bellmer's quirky photographs of dolls (and his accompanying books on the same subject) because of their strangeness are most compelling. Through Oct. 26. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

SHORT LIST—**HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON,** Danziger, 415 West Broadway (through Oct. 19); **LYNN DAVIS,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 12); **PATRICK FAIGENBAUM,** Gladstone, 99 Greene St. (through Oct. 12); **ANDREAS GURSKY,** 303 Gallery, 89 Greene St. (through Oct. 12); **PHILIPPE HALSMAN,** Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (through Oct. 26); **ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ,** Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. and Houk Friedman, 1094 Madison Ave., at 82nd St. (both through Nov. 2); **ANNIE LEIBOVITZ,** Danziger, 415 West Broadway (through Oct. 19), and International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, through Dec. 1); **DUANE MICHALS,** Janis, 110 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 2); **DAVID SALLE,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 12); **LINCOLN TOBIER AND TED BYFIELD,** 10 on 8, Eighth Ave. at 53rd St. (through Oct. 12); **ROBERT YARBER,** Lieberman & Saul, 155 Spring St. (through Oct. 12).

MUSIC

WE note with interest a Carnegie Hall benefit ("Music and Remembrance," October 10) designed to present a group of well-known accompanists as featured artists. It set us thinking about what they do. Not too many decades ago, accompanists were secondary musicians: fluent and graceful; proficient; good at capturing the flavor of a song in a general way; expert at supporting the voice, empathizing with the singer, and discreetly covering rhythmical errors; but rarely playing in a memorable way. It was easy for those who cared about Schumann, Wolf, Schubert, Debussy, or Fauré to recognize that the piano parts in their songs were going unrealized, unplumbed—but those were not the songs that dominated the market. In the middle years of the twentieth century, a handful of dedicated singers and impresarios, and, above all, interesting pianists, with Gerald Moore very much at their head, changed all this. Moore showed that the piano parts written by the great lieder composers had enough in them to nourish a true artist, a pianist of fully realized technical and musical capabilities; the songs, approached on that basis, yielded up new treasures in performance.

One result of this is that the business of vocal accompaniment grew in stature and remunerativeness. Another is that celebrated piano soloists and conductors began to horn in on the accompanist's act in far greater numbers than had previously been the case. New York in recent seasons has heard song recitalists accompanied by Vladimir Azhkenazy, András Schiff, Radu Lupu, and, very often and very satisfyingly, James Levine. And some of the "career" accompanists have been branching out into conducting, ambitious editing projects, artistic direction of concert series and recordings. It is possible that in the future the accompanying of singers will be seen less and less as a specialist's full-time job and more and more as part of a rounded musical life for those who can do it—food for thought for singers and pianists. It's good to take a moment, meanwhile, to salute a group of the field's sturdiest professionals—Margo Garrett, David Garvey, Phillip Moll, and Samuel Sanders are among those who, along with several well-known soloists, will be appearing at Carnegie Hall.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—**DON GIOVANNI,** with Carolyn James, Judith Forst, Ruth Ann Swenson, Stanford Olsen, Ferruccio Furlanetto, and Timothy Noble; conducted by James Levine. (Oct. 7 at 8.). . . With Carolyn James, Judith Forst, Ruth Ann Swenson, Stanford Olsen, Ferruccio Furlanetto, and Bruno Pola; James Levine. (Oct. 12 at 8.). . . With Carolyn James, Patricia Shuman, Ruth Ann Swenson, Stanford Olsen, Ferruccio Furlanetto, and Bruno Pola; James Levine. (Oct. 15 at 8.). . . **IDOMENEO,**

with Cheryl Studer, Hei-Kyung Hong, Anne Sofie von Otter, and Anthony Rolfe Johnson; James Levine. (Oct. 8 at 8.)... **UN BALLO IN MASCHERA,** with Leona Mitchell, Sumi Jo, Stefania Toczyska, Peter Dvorsky, and Giorgio Lormi; Thomas Fulton. (Oct. 9 at 8.)... With Leona Mitchell, Sumi Jo, Stefania Toczyska, Taro Ichihara, and Juan Pons; Thomas Fulton. (Oct. 12 at 1.)... **LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST,** opening performances of a new production of Puccini's pistol-packin' "spaghetti Western," with Barbara Daniels, Placido Domingo and Sherrill Milnes; Leonard Slatkin. (Oct. 10 at 7 and Oct. 14 at 8.)... **DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE,** with Dawn Upshaw, Ruth Welting, Jerry Hadley, Mikael Melbye, and Jan-Hendrik Rootering; James Levine. (Oct. 11 and Oct. 16 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—**DIE SOLDATEN,** the much anticipated New York stage première of Bernd Alois Zimmermann's complex, eclectic opera (first presented in 1965), based on a play by the eighteenth-century dramatist Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz. The large cast includes Lisa Saffer, Claudia Cummings, Cynthia Rose, Joyce Castle, Thomas Young, Eugene Perry, Jan Opalach, and Michael Rees Davis; conducted by Christopher Keene. (Oct. 8 at 8 and Oct. 12 at 2.)... **THE MOST HAPPY FELLA,** with Elizabeth Walsh, Karen Ziémba, Elaine Bonazzi, Louis Quilico, Burke Moses, Lara Teeter, and Arthur Rubin; Chris Nance. (Oct. 10 at 8 and Oct. 13 at 2.)... **LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES,** with Gail Dobish, John Fowler, Patryk Wroblewski, and Matthew Lau; Mark Gibson. (Oct. 11 at 8.)... **MADAME BUTTERFLY,** with Cynthia Lawrence, Jennifer Lane, Vincenzo Scuderi, and Peter Lightfoot; Mark Gibson. (Oct. 12 and Oct. 16 at 8.)... **LA TRAVIATA,** with Gail Dobish, Michael Rees Davis, and Peter Barcza; Guido Ajmone-Marsan. (Oct. 15 at 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

"THE SHIP OF FOOLS"—In this staged presentation, members of the Mannes Camerata enact tales from the "Heptameron" of Marguérite de Navarre, enlivened with sixteenth-century music and dances by Josquin Desprez, Janequin, Arcadelt, and others. Paul C. Echols conducts. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. Oct. 9 and Oct. 11-12, all at 8. For information about tickets, call 496-8524.)

WORKS BY ROBERT ASHLEY—At Merkin Concert Hall. Concert presentations of two works that the composer calls "TV Operas." Oct. 7-8 at 8: "Improvement (Don Leaves Linda)," featuring soprano Jacqueline Humbert.... ¶ Oct. 9-10 at 8: "eL/Aficionado," featuring baritone Thomas Buckner.

AMATO OPERA COMPANY—Final performance of "Le Nozze di Figaro." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Oct. 12 at 7:30 and Oct. 13 at 2:30.)

LEE HOIBY OPERAS—See under "Bon Appétit!" in Theatre listings.

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—At Avery Fisher Hall, Yuri Temirkanov conducting. Oct. 8 at 7:30: Prokofiev's "Lieutenant Kije Suite," Rimsky-Korsakov's "Scheherazade," and Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto (with soloist Elizo Virzaladze).... ¶ Oct. 10, Oct. 12, and Oct. 15, all at 8, and Oct. 11 at 11 A.M.: Rimsky-Korsakov's "Russian Easter Overture," Stravinsky's "Petrushka," and Ravel's Concerto for the Left Hand (with pianist Alexander Slobodyanik).

ORPHEUS—The conductorless chamber orchestra collaborates with Murray Perahia in three Mozart piano concertos: the F-Major (K. 413, the composer's well-behaved self-introduction to the Viennese public), the bold and spacious C-Major (K. 503), and the aristocratic, unhurried E-Flat-Major (K. 482). (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 7 at 8.)

AMERICAN COMPOSERS ORCHESTRA—Lawrence Leighton Smith conducts two world premières (Daniel Asia's "Black Light" and Ezra Laderman's Second Piano Concerto, the latter featuring pianist Emanuel Ax) and two New York premières (by Morton Subotnick and Leslie Bassett). (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 13 at 3.)

BAMBERG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA—At Avery Fisher Hall, Christoph Eschenbach conducting. Oct. 13 at 3: Beethoven's "Creatures of Prometheus Overture," Third Symphony, and Third Piano Concerto (with John Browning).... ¶ Oct. 16 at 8: Dvořák's "Carnival Overture" and Ninth Symphony ("From the New World"), and Shostakovich's First Cello Concerto (with Heinrich Schiff).

NEW YORK CONCERT SINGERS—Judith Clurman directs choral works by Mendelssohn, Rorem, Hundley, and others. The concert includes the New York première of William Bolcom's "The Mask," a five-movement cycle for mixed voices and piano, first performed last year. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 13 at 7:30.)

NEW YORK VIRTUOSO SINGERS—Harold Rosenbaum directs a program of works by Copland and Bernstein, featuring mezzo-soprano Lucille Beer. Not to be overlooked among such better-known works as Copland's "In the Beginning" is "Warm-Up," a rarely heard 1969 morsel by Bernstein. Despite its brevity (it lasts only two and a half minutes) and its self-deprecating title, "Warm-Up" is actually a complexly constructed six-part round, composed in swing style, proposing musical material that Bernstein would later incorporate into his "Mass." (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 14 at 8.)

MOZART MASSES IN CONCERT—In addition to Mozart's C-Major "Holy Trinity" Mass (K. 167), student ensembles from Florida State University perform lesser-known choral and orchestral pieces: his Symphony No. 16, G-Major Church Sonata (K. 241), Miserere (K. 85), and "Vesperae Solennes de Dominica" (K. 321). (Alice Tully Hall. Oct. 14 at 8.)

JUILLIARD WIND ENSEMBLE—Mark Gould conducts music by William Schuman, Vincent Persichetti, Copland, Stravinsky (his "Circus Polka" and "Symphonies of Wind Instruments"), and Leoš Janáček—his rarely performed Capriccio for Piano Left Hand, Brass, and Flute (in which pianist Daniel Propper's left hand will be spotlighted). (Alice Tully Hall. Oct. 15 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 769-7406.)

RECITALS

LUCIA POPP—The soprano is assisted by pianist Armen Guzelimian in songs by Dvořák, Mahler, Wolf, and Strauss. (Alice Tully Hall. Oct. 8 at 8.)

CHAMBER MUSIC AT THE Y—Violinist Jaime Laredo and cellist Sharon Robinson perform the "Handel/Halvorson Passacaglia"; Ani and Ida Kavafian offer a Mozart duo for violin and viola; the Tokyo String Quartet plays Bartók's Fourth Quartet; and all parties join in for Mendelssohn's ebullient Octet. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Oct. 8-9 at 8.)

HOPKINSON SMITH—In the first concert of a series that will serve as an aural adjunct to the Metropolitan Museum's exhibit of some thirty-five historic Spanish guitars (and related instruments), Mr. Smith performs works by the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Iberian composers Luis de Milán, Alonso Mudarra, Francisco Guerau, and Gaspar Sanz—some on the vihuela and some on the Renaissance guitar. (Uris Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 81st St. Oct. 9 at 7. For information about tickets, call 570-3919.)

ITZHAK PERLMAN AND DANIEL BARENBOIM—At Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 9 at 8: The violinist and the pianist perform four duo-sonatas by Mozart.... ¶ Oct. 13 at 7:30: Two sonatas and two sets of variations, all by Mozart.

THOMAS YEHUDA TIRINO—In his New York recital début, the pianist performs works by Schubert (the "Wanderer Fantasy"), Janáček (the Sonata "October 1, 1905"), Liszt, and Granados, as well as the première of David Diamond's "Meditation on Kol Nidre." (Alice Tully Hall. Oct. 9 at 8.)

BARGEMUSIC—Pianist Eduardus Halim performs selections from Granados' "Goyescas" (the composer's virtuosic tone-paintings inspired by works of Francisco Goya), and joins with a group of string players for piano quartets—both in E-Flat Major—by Mozart and Dvořák. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Oct. 10 at 7:30 and Oct. 13 at 4.)

"MUSIC & REMEMBRANCE"—Various sets of noted collaborative teams come together for a concert to benefit Affiliate Artists/NEA Accompanists Program and the American Foundation for AIDS Research: soprano Barbara Cook and pianist Wally Harper; flutist James Galway and pianist Phillip Moll; violinists Jaime Laredo and Itzhak Perlman, with pianist Samuel Sanders; soprano Leontyne Price and pianist David Garvey; soprano Dawn Upshaw and pianist Margo Garrett; and dancers Cynthia Gregory (with pianist Gladys Celeste), Tina LaBlanc (of the Joffrey), and Vernon Scott (of the White Oak Dance Project). (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 10 at 8. For ticket information, call 265-8111.)

SYLVAN WINDS—The wind ensemble's program includes works by two Czech composers: an octet by František Kramář (a contemporary of Beethoven who was known in Vienna—where he spent much of his career—as Franz Krommer) and a Sinfonietta by Rudolf Nováček (who lived slightly later in the nineteenth century). (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Oct. 10 at 8.)

SPECULUM MUSIGAE—Presenting a program of recent "maximalist" works, i.e., compositions that rely on harmonic, rhythmic, and textual density. Including music by György Kurtág, Lee Hyla, Morris Rosenzweig, and Robert Yekovich. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Oct. 10 at 8.)

CHRISTINE SCHADEBERG—The soprano, assisted by pianists Steven Gerber and Hayes Biggs, performs songs by Jack Beeson, Cole Porter, Otto Luening, Frank Wigglesworth, and others (including works by both of her accompanists). (Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. Oct. 10 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET—To celebrate its forty-fifth anniversary, the ensemble performs a program that bespeaks its adventurous character: all four of Elliott Carter's string quartets. The second and third—each earned their composer a Pulitzer Prize—were actually premièred by the ensemble, in 1960 and 1973. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Oct. 11 at 8.)... **NOTE:** On Oct. 8 at 6, in Juilliard's Paul Recital Hall, Mr. Carter will join the members of the foursome in discussing and demonstrating aspects of his four quartets. (For information about tickets for either event, call 769-7406.)

The Juilliard String Quartet

SHANGHAI STRING QUARTET—The Chinese group performs Haydn's "Emperor" Quartet and Janáček's "Kreutzer" Quartet; and cellist Jian Wang joins them for Schubert's C-Major Quintet. (Weill Recital Hall. Oct. 11 at 8.)

EMERSON STRING QUARTET—Performing three of Mozart's quartets dedicated to Haydn. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Oct. 11 at 8.)

GUARNERI QUARTET—Performing works by Beethoven (his Op. 18, no. 5), Bartók (his sixth), and Mendelssohn (his D-Major, Op. 44, no. 3). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Oct. 12 at 8.)

MISHA AND CIPA DICHTER—The husband-and-wife duo-piano team performs Schubert's "Grand Duo" (a "symphony manqué" for piano four-hands) and Rachmaninoff's "Symphonic Dances" for two pianos. In addition, Mr. Dichter will perform Schubert's A-Minor Sonata, D. 784, and Bartók's "Fifteen Hungarian Peasant Songs." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Oct. 12 at 8.)

BROOKLYN FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC—Presenting works by Schumann, Rachmaninoff, Roussel, and Poulenc, ranging from sonatas to songs (sung by soprano Theresa Hamm). (Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, 85 S. Oxford

MUSIC—Cont'd

St., Brooklyn. Oct. 13 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

New York Festival of Song—Mezzo-soprano Jane Bunnell and baritone Patrick Mason join pianists Michael Barrett and Steven Blier in Bernstein's "Arias and Barcarolles," as well as songs by Barber, Blitzstein, and others. (Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. 242-4770. Oct. 13 at 5.)

Eugenia Zukerman and Anthony Newman—The flutist and the harpsichordist, assisted by soprano Julianne Baird, perform music by Rameau, Purcell, and François Couperin. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. Oct. 15 at 6. For information about tickets, call 930-0571.)

VineyardMusicke—The early-music ensemble, with guest percussionist Ben Harms, offers a program of music from the American colonies, including popular tunes and marches of the day and songs by Francis Hopkinson, who not only signed the Declaration of Independence but also published the first songs in America (his "Seven Songs for the Harpsichord," dedicated to George Washington and curiously titled, since when the volume appeared, in 1788, its songs numbered eight). (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874. Oct. 15 at 8.)

David Borden and his Mother Mallard Band—Performing works of the minimalist persuasion by Mr. Borden. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Oct. 15 at 8.)

Nelly Kokinos—Pianist, performing works by Mozart, Chopin, Liszt, Brahms, and Debussy. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 15 at 8.)

Seth Carlin—Fortepianist, performing the first of five concerts this season in which he will play all of Schubert's piano sonatas. The opener comprises the A-Minor (D. 537), the E-Flat-Major (D. 568), and the B-Major (D. 575). (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 16 at 8.)

Villa-Lobos Society—A concert of chamber music by the exceedingly prolific Brazilian composer, including two "chôros," the relatively well-known "Quintet in the Form of a Chôros," his Fifth String Quartet, and numerous songs (performed by soprano Gabriella Widman and pianist Alfred Heller). (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Oct. 16 at 8. For information about tickets, call 427-5103.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Ban the Dam Jam Concert Series—These three shows will expend a few hundred thousand watts on behalf of the Cree Indians of Canada, who are trying to raise funds to block a proposed New York State-sponsored hydroelectric contract with the province of Quebec. (The Cree fear the potentially destructive environmental effects of the project on their ancestral lands, near James Bay.) The first show, on October 7, will feature what *USA Today* likes to call "cause-rockers": the folk-rock duo Indigo Girls, the Canadian rocker Bruce Cockburn, and that most P.C. guitar-strummer of them all, Jackson Browne. (The American Indian Dance Theatre will also perform.) The second show, on October 11, offers a lineup of singer-songwriters from the sublime (Rosanne Cash) to the sensitive (Dan Fogelberg). Mary-Chapin Carpenter and Pura Fé are also scheduled to appear. The Saturday-night blast, on October 12, will be an especially hot ticket: the great Los Angeles rock band X, which is planning a new record and tour, will be appearing in New York for the first time since way back in the eighties, and Talking Tête David Byrne will play an acoustic set. Mike Scott, the leader of the Waterboys, one of the best English bands of the eighties, is also on the bill, along with Grafittiman. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Concerts at 7:30.)

Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers—Tom Petty's latest album, "Into the Great Wide Open," sticks close to its predecessor, the radiant "Full Moon Fever," but his recent partnership with Jeff Lynne is beginning to wear thin. On record, the music they forge together, a sweetly tuned, intimate sound that's wry yet overly familiar, lacks verve. The real magic happens onstage, where Petty's band, the Heartbreakers, and especially the guitarist Mike Campbell, punch up the songs into a rowdy, swinging rock-and-roll affair. Anthems away. (Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 794-9300. Oct. 8 at 8. . . . ¶ Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. Oct. 9 at 7:30.)

Al Arbour, head coach of the Islanders

Amy Grant—This singer's campaign to attain mainstream success beyond her niche as the reigning queen of Christian gospel-pop finally paid off this year with the release of her third semi-secular album, "Heart in Motion," and its No. 1 single, "Baby Baby." (The controversy over the video for that song—the perky star coyly flirts with a young hunk, instead of warbling to an unseen and presumably divine object of affection—proves that "steaminess" is an entirely relative quality.) This direct-from-the-factory concert will feature the usual upbeat, synthesizer-driven dance tunes and power ballads, but the most intriguing version of the new Amy Grant can be heard in some of the darker, brooding material that's slipped in between the new commercial stuff and the old devotional chestnuts. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Oct. 10 at 7:30.)

Jesus Jones/Ned's Atomic Dustbin—The headliner, Jesus Jones, may be the dangerous sampling pop group of the moment (along with EMF), but this show's opening act, Ned's Atomic Dustbin, is the one to watch out for. This British band's début album, "God Fodder," is full of sharp, guitar-driven tunes that would make any Replacements fan happy. There's a little more youthful mayhem to them, though, and their songs—fast, streamlined rockers that make sudden, inexplicable left turns during the chorus—shift gears in the way that a great song by XTC can. They should be able to keep an audience hopping (or slamming). (Academy Theatre, 234 W. 43rd St. 307-7171. Oct. 11-12 at 9.)

Squeeze—Squeeze has been playing impeccable, beautifully constructed pop tunes for years. Their new album, "Play," is one of their best, yet they still haven't achieved anything beyond a large cult following. It's odd. Their shows, filled with sinister, midtempo songs that rank right up there with Costello's, are loose, expressive affairs. (Beacon Theatre. Oct. 16-17 at 8.)

Manhattan Jazz Ensembles—Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. Oct. 8 at 8. No tickets necessary.

Jazz Concert—Amina Claudine Myers, Leroy Jenkins, and Henry Threadgill. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Oct. 9 at 8.)

"Highlights in Jazz"—Monty Alexander, with a trio and with a big band. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. Oct. 10 at 8.)

Jean-Luc Ponty—Paramount. Oct. 11 at 8.

Salute to Bob Marley—With the Wailers, Rita Marley, Marcia Griffith, and Andrew Tosh. (Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 864-0372. Oct. 11 at 7 and 11.)

Ustad Vilayat Khan—Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Oct. 11 at 8.

Rosemary Clooney—With Linda Ronstadt. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Oct. 12 at 8.)

Regina Belle—With Will Downing. (Apollo Theatre. Oct. 12 at 7 and 11.)

Pandit Pran Nath—With La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. Oct. 13 at 3.)

"Heavenly Jazz"—Warren Vaché, Janice Friedman, and Murray Wall. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Oct. 13 at 5. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

"All Nite Soul"—A twelve-hour jazz marathon, with performances by the Harlem Blues & Jazz Band, Daphne Hellman, Billy Taylor, and the Copasetics, among others. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Oct. 13, starting at 5 P.M. Admission by contribution.)

"World Beat Blues"—John Cephas & Phil Wiggins, Abdourahman Mangara, and Hassan and Said Hakmoun. (Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St. Oct. 15 at 7. No tickets necessary.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Jets—Vs. the Houston Oilers, Oct. 13 at 4.

Rangers—Vs. the Boston Bruins, Oct. 7. . . . ¶ Vs. the Islanders, Oct. 9. . . . ¶ Vs. the Washington Capitals, Oct. 14. . . . ¶ Vs. the Devils, Oct. 16. (Game time, 7:30.)

Islanders—Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, Oct. 12. . . . ¶ Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, Oct. 15. (Game time, 7:35.)

Devils—Vs. the Quebec Nordiques, Oct. 8 at 7:35. . . . ¶ Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, Oct. 12 at 1:35.

(The Jets play at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands; for tickets, call 1-516 538-6600. The Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; and the Devils at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

RACING

Horses—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. The Champagne and the Frizette are both on Oct. 12. Through Oct. 21. . . . At the Meadowlands: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. . . . **trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weekdays at 8, and Tuesdays at 1.

CHAMPIONSHIP—BASEBALL

Playoffs—The American League championship series starts Oct. 8 in Minnesota, where the Twins will face the Toronto Blue Jays. The National League championship series starts Oct. 9 in Pittsburgh, where the Pirates will face either the Dodgers or the Braves. All games will be on CBS.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Yannis Stavrakakis—O.K., so you might not ever have heard of him, but he has an interesting job. He's in charge of the restoration of the Parthenon—not a new night club but the ancient Greek temple. He'll talk about looting, pollution, and marble cutting, among other subjects. (School of Visual Arts, 209 E. 23rd St. Oct. 16 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Readings—Oct. 8 at 8: Michael Holroyd and John Richardson read from their own prose. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799.). . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 7: Henry Morgenthau III reads from his book about his family. (Brentano's, Fifth Ave. at 48th St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Oct. 11 at 8: Jayne Cortez reads from her own poetry and James Wilcox reads from his own fiction. (West Side Y, 5 W. 63rd St. For information about tickets, call 875-4124.). . . ¶ Oct. 14 at 7: Uta Ranke-Heinemann reads from "Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven." (Brentano's, Fifth Ave. at 48th St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Oct. 14 at 8: Adrienne Rich reads from her own poetry. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.). . . ¶ Oct. 14 at 8: Heather Woodbury and Lenora Champagne read from their own works. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Walks—Oct. 13 at 11:30: Adventure on a Shoestring sponsors a walking tour of Hell's Kitchen, former home of gangsters and glue factories. (For reservations, call 265-2663.). . . ¶ Oct. 13 at 1: The New York Marxist School sponsors what it calls "A Radical Walking Tour." (For more information, call 941-0332.)

Memorandum—Columbus Day is observed on Oct. 14, and the parade up Fifth Ave. starts on that day at 11 A.M., at 44th St.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

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13	14	15	16			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 24.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)

Theatre 1: "Slacker" (†).

Theatre 2: "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll" (†).

Theatre 3: "The Rapture" (directed by Michael Tolkin), with Mimi Rogers.

Theatre 4: The 23rd International Tournée of Animation.

Theatre 5: "Thousand Pieces of Gold" (Nancy Kelly), with Rosalind Chao, Dennis Dun, Chris Cooper, and Michael Paul Chan.

Theatre 6: Through Oct. 10: "Trust" (†). From Oct. 11: Two documentaries.

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

Oct. 7: Theatre closed.

Oct. 8: "La Chienne" (1931, Jean Renoir; in French), with Michel Simon; and "Pattes Blanches" (1949, Jean Grémillon; in French).

Oct. 9: "Going Places" (1974, Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Miou-Miou, and Patrick Dewaere; and "Buffet Froid" (1980, Blier; in French), with Depardieu.

Oct. 10: "Voyage Surprise" (†); and "Prix de Beauté" (1930, Augusto Génina; in French), with Louise Brooks.

Oct. 11-12: "Sartre by Himself" (1979, Alexandre Astruc and Michel Contat); and "Simone de Beauvoir" (1978, Josée Dayan and Malka Ribowska; in French), a documentary.

Oct. 13: "A Day in the Country" (1937, Jean Renoir; in French); and "The Diary of a Country Priest" (1950, Robert Bresson; in French).

Oct. 14: Theatre closed.

Oct. 15: "Herdsmen of the Sun" (1988, Werner Herzog); and "The Lion Hunters" (1965, Jean Rouch).

Oct. 16: "Lola" (1961, Jacques Demy; in French), with Anouk Aimée and Marc Michel; and "A Woman Is a Woman" (1961, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina, Jean-Paul Belmondo, and Jean-Claude Brialy.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)

Theatre 1: "Barton Fink" (†).

Theatre 2: "The Fisher King" (†).

Theatre 3: "Ricochet" (Russell Mulcahy), with Denzel Washington and John Lithgow.

Loews Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 10: "The Indian Runner" (Sean Penn), with David Morse. From Oct. 11: "Frankie & Johnny" (Garry Marshall), with Al Pacino and Michelle Pfeiffer.

Theatre 2: "Dead Again" (†).

Theatre 3: "Whore" (Ken Russell), with Theresa Russell.

Theatre 4: "Liebestraum" (Mike Figgis), with Kevin Anderson.

Theatre 5: "Stepping Out" (Lewis Gilbert), with Liza Minnelli.

Theatre 6: "Rambling Rose" (Martha Coolidge), with Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Lukas Hass, and Robert Duvall.

Theatre 7: "Dogfight" (Nancy Savoca), with River Phoenix and Lili Taylor.

Cinema Village 12th Street, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

"Eating" (Henry Jaglom).

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 8: "The Miracle" (Neil Jordan). From Oct. 9: "Homicide" (David Mamet), with Joe Mantegna.

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 8: "The Doctor" (†). From Oct. 9: "Homicide."

Theatre 3: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).

Theatre 4: Through Oct. 10: "Naked Tango" (Leonard Schrader). From Oct. 11: "The Boy Who Cried Bitch" (Juan Jose Campanella).

Theatre 5: "Twenty-One" (Don Boyd), with Patsy Kensit.

Theatre 6: Through Oct. 10: "Deceived" (Damian Harris), with Goldie Hawn and John Heard. From Oct. 11: "Shattered" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Tom Berenger, Bob Hoskins, and Greta Scacchi.

Theatre 7: "Paradise" (Mary Agnes Donoghue), with Melanie Griffith, Don Johnson, and Elijah Wood.

Cinema Village 3rd Avenue, between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)

"Festival of Animation 1991."

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)

Theatre 1: Oct. 7: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†). Oct. 8: Theatre closed. From Oct. 9: "Little Man Tate" (Jodie Foster), with Foster.

Theatre 2: "Ricochet" (Russell Mulcahy), with Denzel Washington and John Lithgow.

Theatre 3: "Necessary Roughness" (Stan Dragoti), with Scott Bakula.

Theatre 4: Through Oct. 10: "Late for Dinner" (W. D. Richter), with Brian Wimmer and Peter Berg. From Oct. 11: "The Taking of Beverly Hills" (Sidney J. Furie), with Ken Wahl.

Theatre 5: "The Fisher King" (†).

Theatre 6: "Suburban Commando" (Burt Kennedy), with Hulk Hogan, Christopher Lloyd, and Shelley Duvall.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

"The Doctor" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)

"Late for Dinner" (W. D. Richter), with Brian Wimmer and Peter Berg.

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)

Theatre 1: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 10: "Thelma & Louise" (Ridley Scott), with Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis. From Oct. 11: "Ernest Scared Stupid" (John Cherry), with Jim Varney.

Theatre 3: Through Oct. 10: "Deceived" (Damian Harris), with Goldie Hawn and John Heard. From Oct. 11: "Shattered" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Tom Berenger.

Theatre 4: "Paradise" (Mary Agnes Donoghue), with Melanie Griffith, Don Johnson, and Elijah Wood.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "Necessary Roughness" (Stan Dragoti), with Scott Bakula.

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 10: "Dead Again" (†). From Oct. 11: "Frankie & Johnny" (Garry Marshall), with Al Pacino and Michelle Pfeiffer.

Theatre 3: "Ricochet" (Russell Mulcahy), with Denzel Washington and John Lithgow.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

"The Super" (Rod Daniel), with Joe Pesci.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)

"Paris Is Burning" (†).

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 10: "Twenty-One" (Don Boyd), with Patsy Kensit. From Oct. 11: "Shattered" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Tom Berenger, Bob Hoskins, and Greta Scacchi.

Theatre 2: "The Doctor" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

"Barton Fink" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

"My Own Private Idaho" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: "The Super" (Rod Daniel), with Joe Pesci.

Theatre 2: "Shout" (Jeffrey Hornaday), with James Walters, Heather Graham, Richard Jordan, Linda Fiorentino, and John Travolta.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)

Through Oct. 10: "Whore" (Ken Russell), with Theresa Russell.

From Oct. 11: "The Taking of Beverly Hills" (Sidney J. Furie), with Ken Wahl.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)

Theatre 1: "Rambling Rose" (Martha Coolidge), with Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Lukas Hass, and Robert Duvall.

Theatre 2: "The Rapture" (Michael Tolkin), with Mimi Rogers.

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: "Deceived" (Damian Harris), with Goldie Hawn and John Heard.

Theatre 2: "Paradise" (Mary Agnes Donoghue), with Melanie Griffith, Don Johnson, and Elijah Wood.

Theatre 3: Through Oct. 8: "Naked Tango" (Leonard Schrader). From Oct. 9: "The Story of Boys and Girls" (Pupi Avati, in Italian).

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: "The Fisher King" (†).

Theatre 2: "Ricochet" (Russell Mulcahy), with Denzel Washington and John Lithgow.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

"The Commitments" (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. ([illegible]4-7339)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 10: "Dead Again" (†). From Oct. 11: "Frankie & Johnny" (Garry Marshall), with Al Pacino and Michelle Pfeiffer.

Theatre 2: Oct. 7: "Late for Dinner" (W. D. Richter), with Brian Wimmer and Peter Berg. Oct. 8: Theatre closed. From Oct. 9: "Little Man Tate" (Jodie Foster), with Foster.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)

Through Oct. 8: "The Story of Boys and Girls" (Pupi Avati, in Italian).

From Oct. 9: "Homicide" (David Mamet), with Joe Mantegna.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

"Stepping Out" (Lewis Gilbert), with Liza Minnelli.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

From Oct. 10: "Necessary Roughness" (Stan Dragoti), with Scott Bakula.

From Oct. 11: "Frankie & Johnny" (Garry Marshall), with Al Pacino and Michelle Pfeiffer.

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 10: "Suburban Commando" (Burt Kennedy), with Hulk Hogan, Christopher Lloyd, and Shelley Duvall. From Oct. 11: "The Taking of Beverly Hills" (Sidney J. Furie), with Ken Wahl.

Theatre 2: "The Super" (Rod Daniel), with Joe Pesci.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 10: "Dead Again" (†). From Oct. 11: "Ernest Scared Stupid" (John Cherry), with Jim Varney.

Theatre 2: "Deceived" (Damian Harris), with Goldie Hawn and John Heard.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 15: "Takeover: Heroes of the New American Depression" (directed by Peter Kinoy and Pamela Yates) and "To the Moon, Alice" (1989, Jessie Nelson). From Oct. 16: "The Cry of the Owl" (1987, Claude Chabrol; in French).

Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.

Theatre 3: "Black Lizard" (†).

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: (Separate admissions) "My Own Private Idaho" (†); and "Late for Dinner" (W. D. Richter), with Brian Wimmer and Peter Berg.

Theatre 2: "My Own Private Idaho" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)

Through Oct. 10: "Thelma & Louise" (Ridley Scott), with Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis.

From Oct. 11: "Ernest Scared Stupid" (John Cherry), with Jim Varney.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12[illegible] (929-3350)

Theatre 1: "The Super" (Rod Daniel), with Joe Pesci.

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 10: "Necessary Roughness" (Stan Dragoti), with Scott Bakula. From Oct. 11: "The Taking of Beverly Hills" (Sidney J. Furie), with Ken Wahl.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: "La Femme Nikita" (Luc Besson; in French).

Theatre 2: "My Mother's Castle" (Yves Robert, in French), with Julien Ciamaca.

Theatre 3: "My Father's Glory" (Yves Robert, in French), with Julien Ciamaca.

Theatre 4: "Paris Is Burning" (†).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)

Theatre 1: "Dead Again" (†).

Theatre 2: "Rambling Rose" (Martha Coolidge), with Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Lukas Hass, and Robert Duvall.

At MOMA, Adolphe Menjou and Marie Prevost in Lubitsch's "The Marriage Circle"

Theatre 3: Through Oct. 10: "Rambling Rose." From Oct. 11: "City of Hope" (John Sayles), with Vincent Spano, Tony Lo Bianco, Joe Morton, Barbara Williams, and Sayles.
Theatre 4: "Whore" (Ken Russell), with Theresa Russell.
Theatre 5: Through Oct. 10: "Shout" (Jeffrey Hornaday). From Oct. 11: "Frankie & Johnny" (Garry Marshall), with Al Pacino and Michelle Pfeiffer.
Theatre 6: "The Commitments" (†).
Theatre 7: "Paradise" (Mary Agnes Donoghue), with Melanie Griffith, Don Johnson, and Elijah Wood.
Theatre 8: Through Oct. 10: "Deceived" (Damian Harris), with Goldie Hawn and John Heard. From Oct. 11: "Shattered" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Tom Berenger, Bob Hoskins, and Greta Scacchi.
Theatre 9: "The Super" (Rod Daniel), with Joe Pesci.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Livin' Large!" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 10: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane. From Oct. 11: "Ernest Scared Stupid" (John Cherry), with Jim Varney.
Theatre 3: "Defenseless" (Martin Campbell), with Barbara Hershey, Sam Shepard, and Mary Beth Hurt.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Paradise" (Mary Agnes Donoghue), with Melanie Griffith, Don Johnson, and Elijah Wood.

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Trust" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll" (†).
Theatre 3: "City Slickers" (†).
Theatre 4: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (Kevin Reynolds), with Kevin Costner.
Theatre 5: "Whore" (Ken Russell), with Theresa Russell.
Theatre 6: "Doc Hollywood" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"The Commitments" (†).

Loews Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"The Indian Runner" (Sean Penn), with David Morse.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Barton Fink" (†).
Theatre 2: "Barton Fink" (†).

Loews Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"The Man in the Moon" (Robert Mulligan), with Sam Waterston, Tess Harper, and Gail Strickland.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Necessary Roughness" (Stan Dragoti), with Scott Bakula.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Stepping Out" (Lewis Gilbert), with Liza Minnelli.

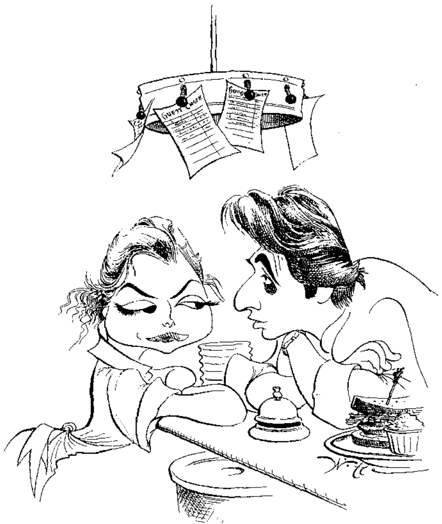
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Whore" (Ken Russell), with Theresa Russell.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 10: "Uranus" (Claude Berri, in French). From Oct. 11: "City of Hope" (John Sayles), with Vincent Spano, Tony Lo Bianco, Joe Morton, Barbara Williams, and Sayles.
Theatre 2: "Europa Europa" (†).
Theatre 3: "La Belle Noiseuse" (Jacques Rivette, in French), with Michel Piccoli, Emmanuelle Béart, and Jane Birkin.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Rambling Rose" (Martha Coolidge), with Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Lukas Hass, and Robert Duvall.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Ricochet" (Russell Mulcahy), with Denzel Washington and John Lithgow.
Theatre 2: "The Fisher King" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Oct. 10: "Paradise" (Mary Agnes Donoghue), with Melanie Griffith, Don Johnson, and Elijah Wood. From Oct. 11: "Shattered" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Tom Berenger, Bob Hoskins, and Greta Scacchi.
Theatre 4: "Dead Again" (†).
Theatre 5: Through Oct. 8: "Late for Dinner" (W. D. Richter), with Brian Wimmer and Peter Berg. From Oct. 9: "Little Man Tate" (Jodie Foster), with Foster.
Theatre 6: Through Oct. 10: "Necessary Roughness" (Stan Dragoti), with Scott Bakula. From Oct. 11: "Frankie & Johnny" (Garry Marshall), with Al Pacino and Michelle Pfeiffer.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Shout" (Jeffrey Hornaday), with James Walters, Heather Graham, Richard Jordan, Linda Fiorentino, and John Travolta.
Theatre 2: "Deceived" (Damian Harris), with Goldie Hawn and John Heard.



Michelle Pfeiffer and Al Pacino in "Frankie & Johnny"

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 10: "Suburban Commando" (Burt Kennedy). From Oct. 11: "The Taking of Beverly Hills" (Sidney J. Furie), with Ken Wahl.
Theatre 2: "The Super" (Rod Daniel), with Joe Pesci.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "The Fisher King" (†).
Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).
Theatre 3: "McBain" (directed by James Glickenhaus), with Christopher Walken.
Theatre 4: "Ricochet" (Russell Mulcahy), with Denzel Washington and John Lithgow.
Theatre 5: "The Super" (Rod Daniel), with Joe Pesci.
Theatre 6: "Suburban Commando" (Burt Kennedy), with Hulk Hogan.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Deceived" (Damian Harris), with Goldie Hawn and John Heard.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 10: "Late for Dinner" (W. D. Richter), with Brian Wimmer and Peter Berg. From Oct. 11: "Shattered" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Tom Berenger, Bob Hoskins, and Greta Scacchi.
Theatre 2: "Dead Again" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Oct. 10: "The Doctor" (†). From Oct. 11: "Ernest Scared Stupid" (John Cherry), with Jim Varney.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
Through Oct. 10: "Necessary Roughness" (Stan Dragoti), with Scott Bakula.
From Oct. 11: "Frankie & Johnny" (Garry Marshall), with Al Pacino and Michelle Pfeiffer.

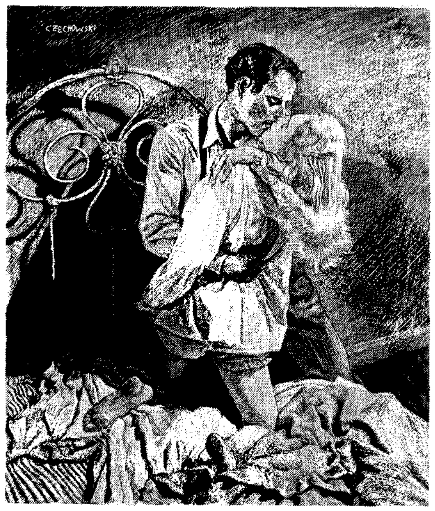
National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Livin' Large!" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 10: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay). From Oct. 11: "The Taking of Beverly Hills" (Sidney J. Furie), with Ken Wahl.

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "Showdown in Little Tokyo" (Mark L. Lester), with Dolph Lundgren and Brandon Lee.
Theatre 2: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Oct. 7: "Gunman" (1988, directed by Kirk Wong).
Oct. 8-9: "Swordsman" (1990, King Hu and Tsui Hark).
Oct. 10: "Wheels on Meals" (1984, Samo Hung).
From Oct. 11: "Lyrical Nitrate" (1990, Peter Delpeut), a documentary.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Oct. 7: "La Grande Illusion" (1937, Jean Renoir; in French), with Erich von Stroheim, Jean Gabin, Pierre Fresnay, and Marcel Dalio; and "La Bête Humaine" (1938, Renoir; in French), with Gabin.
Oct. 8: "Chinatown" (1974, Roman Polanski), with Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, and John Huston; and "Marlowe" (1969, Paul Bogart), with James Garner, Gayle Hunnicutt, Carole O'Connor, and Rita Moreno.
Oct. 9: "North by Northwest" (1959, Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint, James Mason, Jessie Royce Landis, and Leo. G. Carroll; and "I Confess" (1953, Hitchcock), with Montgomery Clift, Anne Baxter, and Karl Malden.
Oct. 10: "A Fistful of Dollars" (1967, Sergio Leone), with Clint Eastwood; and "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" (1966, Leone), with Eastwood, Lee Van Cleef, and Eli Wallach.
Oct. 11-12: "The Philadelphia Story" (1940, George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, James Stewart, Cary Grant, and Ruth Hussey; and "Bringing Up Baby" (†).
Oct. 13: "Zelig" (1983, Woody Allen), with Allen and Mia Farrow; and "A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy" (†).
Oct. 14: "I Sent a Letter to My Love" (1981, Moshe Mizrahi; in French), with Simone Signoret and Jean Rochefort; and "Madame Rosa" (1978, Mizrahi; in French), with Signoret.
Oct. 15: "Touch of Evil" (1958, Orson Welles), with Welles, Charlton Heston, and Janet Leigh; and "Shadow of a Doubt" (1942,



At Theatre 80 St. Marks, Charlton Heston and Janet Leigh in "Touch of Evil"

MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

Alfred Hitchcock), with Teresa Wright and Joseph Cotten.

Oct. 16: "The Desert Fox" (1951, Henry Hathaway), with James Mason; and "The Desert Rats" (1953, Robert Wise), with Mason, Richard Burton, and Robert Newton.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—Oct. 7 at 2:30 and Oct. 10 at 6: "Tempo Massimo" (1934, directed by Mario Mattoli; in Italian), with Vittorio De Sica, Milly, and Anna Magnani. . . . ¶ Oct. 7 at 6: "Due Cuori Felici" (1932, Baldassare Negroni; in Italian), with De Sica. . . . ¶ Oct. 8 at 2:30: "Doctor Beware" (1941, De Sica; in Italian), with De Sica, Adriana Benetti, and Magnani. . . . ¶ Oct. 8 at 3 and 6: "Betrayal" (1939, Fedor Ozep; in French), with Annie Vernay. . . . ¶ Oct. 8 at 6 and Oct. 10 at 2:30: "Un Garibaldino al Convento" (1942, De Sica; in Italian), with De Sica. . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 3 and 6: "Women of the Iron Frontier" (1990, Lilias Fraser), a documentary. . . . ¶ Oct. 11 at 2:30 and Oct. 13 at 5: "Darò un Milione" (1935, Mario Camerini; in Italian), with De Sica and Assia Noris. . . . ¶ Oct. 11 at 3 and Oct. 13 at 5: "The Marriage Circle" (1925, Ernst Lubitsch; silent), with Monte Blue, Florence Vidor, Adolphe Menjou, and Marie Prevost. . . . ¶ Oct. 11 at 6 and Oct. 13 at 2: "The Children Are Watching Us" (†). . . . ¶ Oct. 11 at 6 and Oct. 13 at 2:30: "Little Caesar" (1930, Mervyn LeRoy), with Edward G. Robinson, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Glenda Farrell. . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 2 and Oct. 14 at 6: "Napoli d'Altri Tempi" (1938, Amleto Palermi; in Italian), with De Sica. . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 2:30 and Oct. 14 at 6: "Casablanca" (1942, Michael Curtiz), with Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, and Claude Rains. . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 5 and Oct. 14 at 2:30: "La Porta del Cielo" (1944-46, De Sica; in Italian), with Marina Berti. . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 5 and Oct. 14 at 3: "Splendor in the Grass" (†). . . . ¶ Oct. 15 at 2:30 and 6: "Satan" (1991, Viktor Aristov; in Russian). . . . ¶ Oct. 15 at 3: "I Nostri Sogni" (1943, Vittorio Cottafavi; in Italian), with De Sica. . . . ¶ Oct. 15 at 6: "Roma, Città Libera" (1946, Marcello Pagliero; in Italian), with De Sica and Valentina Cortese.

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—Oct. 9-13 at 7, 8:30, and 10: "The Heck with Hollywood!" (1991, Doug Block). . . . ¶ Oct. 9 at 7: "Les Enfants Terribles" ("The Strange Ones"; 1949, Jean-Pierre Melville; in French), with Nicole Stéphane, Edouard Dermithe, Renée Cosima, and Jacques Bernard. . . . ¶ Oct. 9 at 9: "M" (1931, Fritz Lang; in German), with Peter Lorre. . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 7: "Crime and Punishment" (†). . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 9: "Symphonie Pastorale" (†). . . . ¶ Oct. 11 at 7: "The Blood of a Poet" (1930, Jean Cocteau; in French). . . . ¶ Oct. 11 at 8: "Children of Paradise" (1945, Marcel Carné; in French), with Jean-Louis Barrault and Arletty. . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at noon: Four films starring Jimi Hendrix. . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at noon: "Personal Foul" (1987, Ted Lichtenheld). . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 2: "Only a Buck" (1986, Gerry Cook). . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 4: "Beirut: The Last Home Movie" (1988, Jennifer Fox). . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 6: "Marius" (1931, Alexander Korda; in French), with Raimu, Pierre Fresnay, Oriane Démazis, and Charpin. . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 8: "César" (1936, Marcel Pagnol; in French), with Raimu, Fresnay, Démazis, and Charpin. . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 10: "Fanny" (1932, Marc Allégret; in French), with Raimu, Fresnay, Démazis, and Charpin. . . . ¶ Oct. 13 at 2: "19/19" (1985, Hugh Brody). . . . ¶ Oct. 13 at 6: "Out of the Past" (†). . . . ¶ Oct. 13 at 8: "A Cold Wind in August" (†). . . . ¶ Oct. 13 at 10: "Mademoiselle" (1966, Tony Richardson), with Jeanne Moreau.

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—Oct. 11 at 6:30 and Oct. 12 at 1: "Tora-San, My Uncle" (1989, Yoji Yamada; in Japanese).

Donnell Library Center, 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619)—Oct. 8 at noon: "The Lavender Hill Mob" (1951, Charles Crichton), with Alec Guinness. Stanley Holloway, Alfie Bass, and Sidney James. . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at noon: "The Nuer" (1970, Robert Gardner, Hilary Harris, and George Briedenbach). . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 6: "The Cosmic Eye" (1985, Faith Hubley). . . . ¶ Oct. 15 at noon: "The Man in the White Suit" (1952, Alexander Mackendrick), with Alec Guinness.

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Oct. 9 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Cyrano de Bergerac" (1990, Jean-Paul Rappeneau; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Anne Brochet, and Jacques Weber. . . . ¶ Oct. 16 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "L'Atalante" (1934, Jean Vigo; in French), with Jean Dasté, Dita Parlo, Michel Simon, and Louis Lefèvre.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718-784-0077)—Oct. 12 at 2 and 6 and Oct. 13 at 2: "The Right Stuff" (1983, Philip Kaufman), with Sam Shepard, Scott Glenn, Ed Harris, Dennis Quaid, Fred Ward, and Barbara Hershey.

Symphony Space, B'way at 95th St. (864-5400)—Oct. 14 at 7:30: "Gun Crazy" (1949, Joseph H. Lewis), with Peggy Cummins, John Dall, and Berry Kroeger.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

Barton Fink—The Coen brothers' macabre comedy about a blocked writer in 1941 Hollywood is densely packed with allusions, clever dialogue, ingenious visual jokes, startling plot twists, and imaginative atmospheric effects, yet it feels thin. It's an empty tour de force, and what's dismaying about the picture is that the filmmakers (Joel Coen directed, Ethan Coen produced, and they wrote the script together) seem inordinately pleased with its hermetic meaninglessness. Fink (John Turturro), the protagonist, is a left-wing New York playwright—obviously based on Clifford Odets—who signs a contract to write screenplays in Hollywood. His first assignment is a wrestling picture for Wallace Beery. He can't get started on it: he sits in his seedy, depressing hotel room, stares at the typewriter, and feels defeated. The Coens treat this emblematic figure of thirties culture with merciless contempt. They quickly expose him as a phony, a buffoon, and a talentless hack, and then spend the rest of the movie punishing him. The picture is designed to visit ever more grotesque indignities on a character who's pitiful from the outset; there's not much fun in that. And there's no fun at all in Turturro's hyperactive performance: the way he plays this leftist intellectual, the movie might as well have been called "The Nutty Pinko." The Coens' interests are purely academic, and their prankish formalism becomes very irritating in the course of the picture. Also with John Goodman, Michael Lerner, John Mahoney, Judy Davis, and Tony Shalhoub. The movie won awards for best picture, best director, and best actor (Turturro) at the 1991 Cannes Film Festival.—T.R. (Reviewed in out issue of 9/9/91.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gotham Cinema, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

Black Lizard (1968)—Was Yukio Mishima a fan of the early, funny Woody Allen? This gaudy film version of his seriously decadent stage drama (based on a detective novel by Edogawa Rampo) plays like his answer to "What's Up, Tiger Lily?" It's no more than a curiosity, but not an idle one. Female impersonator Akihiro Maruyama is the distaff jewel thief of the title, who, as a sideline, robs human beauties of their souls and turns them into statues. The movie is swinging sixties trash with dash, filmed in "Shochiku GrandScope" and color that might have leaked out of a yo-yo factory. The director, Kinji Fukasaku, is a hype-happy hack, and the hero, supposedly Japan's top sleuth (played by Isao Kimura), is distinctly unmemorable. But the closing sequence is ripest camp, with Mishima himself showing up as one of the antiheroine's once-living dolls, a man so masculine that his hair won't stop growing even when he's in suspended animation. Written by Masashige Narusawa. In Japanese.—M.S. (Film Forum.)

Boyz N the Hood—The writer and director, John Singleton, is a twenty-three-year-old graduate of the U.S.C. film school. This movie, his first, is a classically constructed—and therefore rather predictable—coming-of-age drama about young black men growing up on the mean streets of south-central Los Angeles. The picture conveys a vivid sense of the dangers, both physical and emotional, of day-to-day existence in this ravaged urban environment. It's a war zone, and its inhabitants—the people on the front lines—mostly don't have the luxury of planning long-range survival strategies: they're too busy reacting to the immediate, unremitting daily threats. Singleton's evocation of real people's struggles to find some measure of peace and sanity in these grim urban circumstances is heartfelt and often moving, and the movie provides a welcome corrective to the dehumanizing sensationalism of the local-news version of inner-city life. But the young filmmaker's professionalism and precocious self-assurance sometimes work against his best instincts. Singleton's plot is disappointingly conventional; it obeys screenwriting-class rules. The experience he's dealing with here deserves something more than the tidy dramatic structure that he has imposed on it. We get glimpses of what the movie might have been in the complex, magnetic performance of Ice Cube, a rap star (formerly of N.W.A.), who plays a neighborhood gangster type named Doughboy. Also with Cuba Gooding, Jr., Larry Fishburne, Nia Long, Tyra Ferrell, and Angela Bassett.—T.R. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, and West Side Cinema.)

Bringing Up Baby (1938)—Lunatic comedies of the thirties generally started with an heiress. This one starts with an heiress (Katharine Hepburn) who has a dog, George, and a leopard, Baby. Cary Grant is a paleontologist who has just acquired the bone he needs to complete his dinosaur skeleton. George steals the bone, Grant and Baby chase each other around, the dinousar collapses—but Grant winds up with Hepburn, and no paleontologist ever got hold of a more beautiful set of bones. The director, Howard Hawks, keeps all this trifling nonsense in such artful balance that it never impinges on the real world; it may be the American movies' closest equivalent to Restoration comedy. With Charles Ruggles as an explorer, Barry Fitzgerald as a drunk, May Robson as a dowager, Walter Catlett as a sheriff, and Fritz Feld as a frenzied psychoanalyst. George is played by Asta, of the "Thin Man" series. The screenplay is by Dudley Nichols and Hagar Wilde, from Wilde's story.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 11-12.)

The Children Are Watching Us (1942)—In this film, Vittorio De Sica found his writer, Cesare Zavattini, and his theme—the destruction of innocence. As in his later works, the enemy is human injustice—not intentional injustice, but what people are driven to do to each other. This is one of those rare movies that are so finely felt that they're too painful and too intransigent ever to reach a large audience. Like De Sica's "Umberto D.," it is a picture of loneliness, but at the other end of the life span. Umberto has little time left; Prico, the four-year-old, has his whole ruined life ahead. His mother, sensually drawn to her lover, hasn't the strength to cling to the child; his ego-shattered father kills himself. Prico is left, agonized and inarticulate, walking the corridors of a boarding school. Except for "Forbidden Games" there has probably never been such a clear view of the antagonism and desolation that separate adult and child life. In Italian.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Oct. 11 and 13.)

City Slickers—This feel-good comedy, directed by Ron Underwood from a script by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel, is a depressingly efficient piece of Hollywood product. The hero, Mitch Robbins (Billy Crystal), is a thirty-nine-year-old New York family man who's going through a killer midlife crisis. His wife (Patricia Wettig) gets so fed up with his moping that she virtually orders him to take a vacation with his buddies Ed (Bruno Kirby) and Phil (Daniel Stern); Ed, a daredevil, macho type, has arranged for them to spend two weeks on a real cattle drive out

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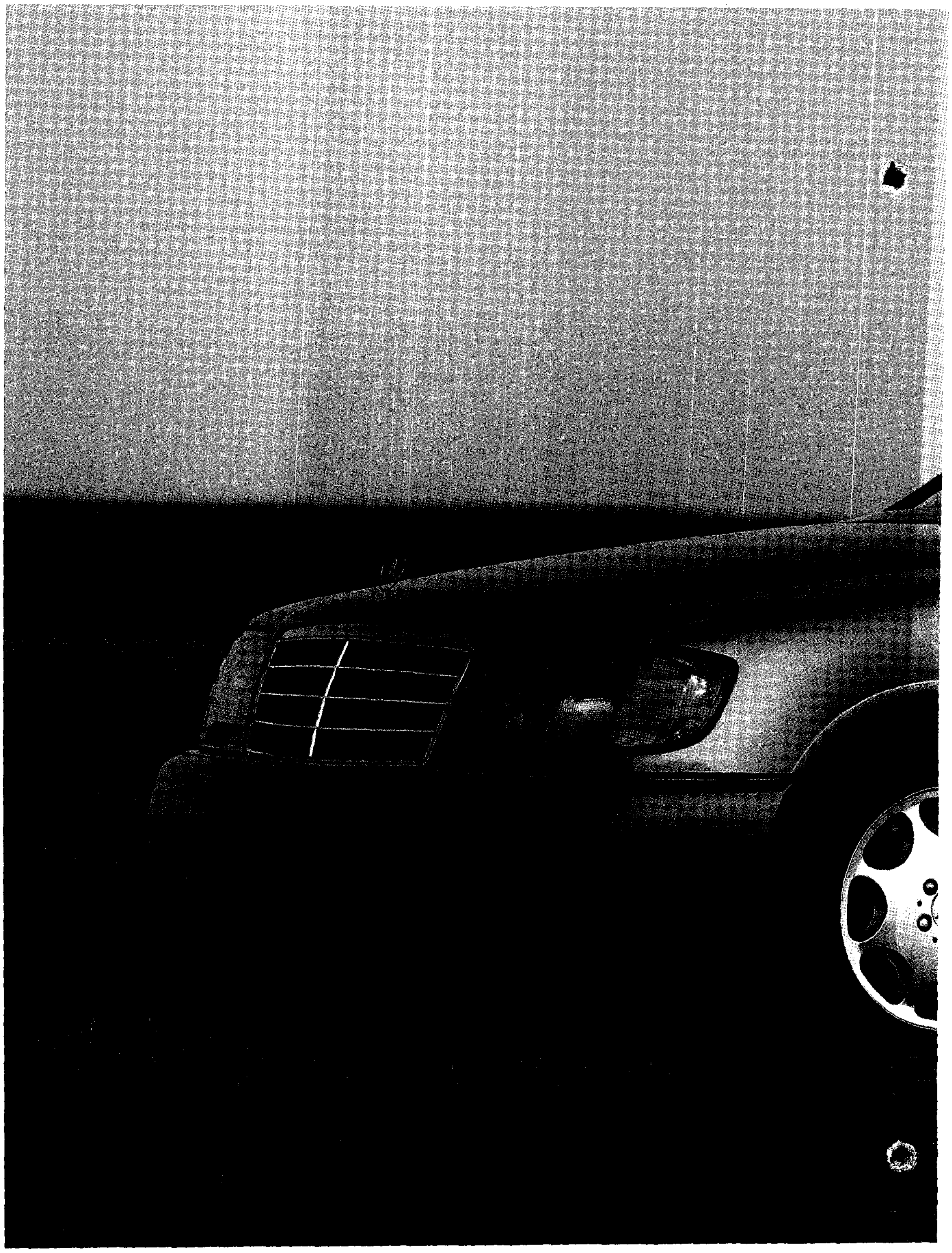

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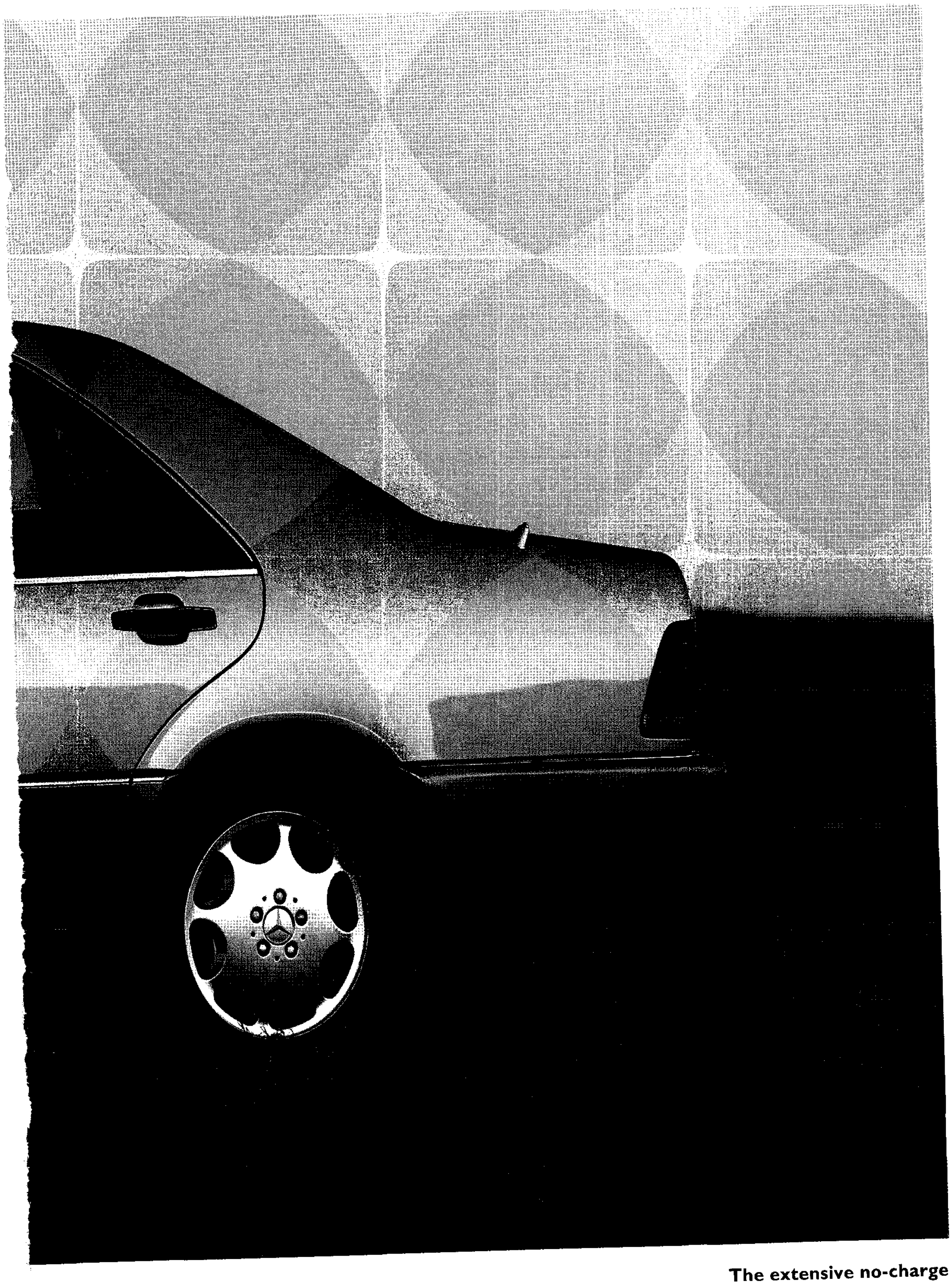
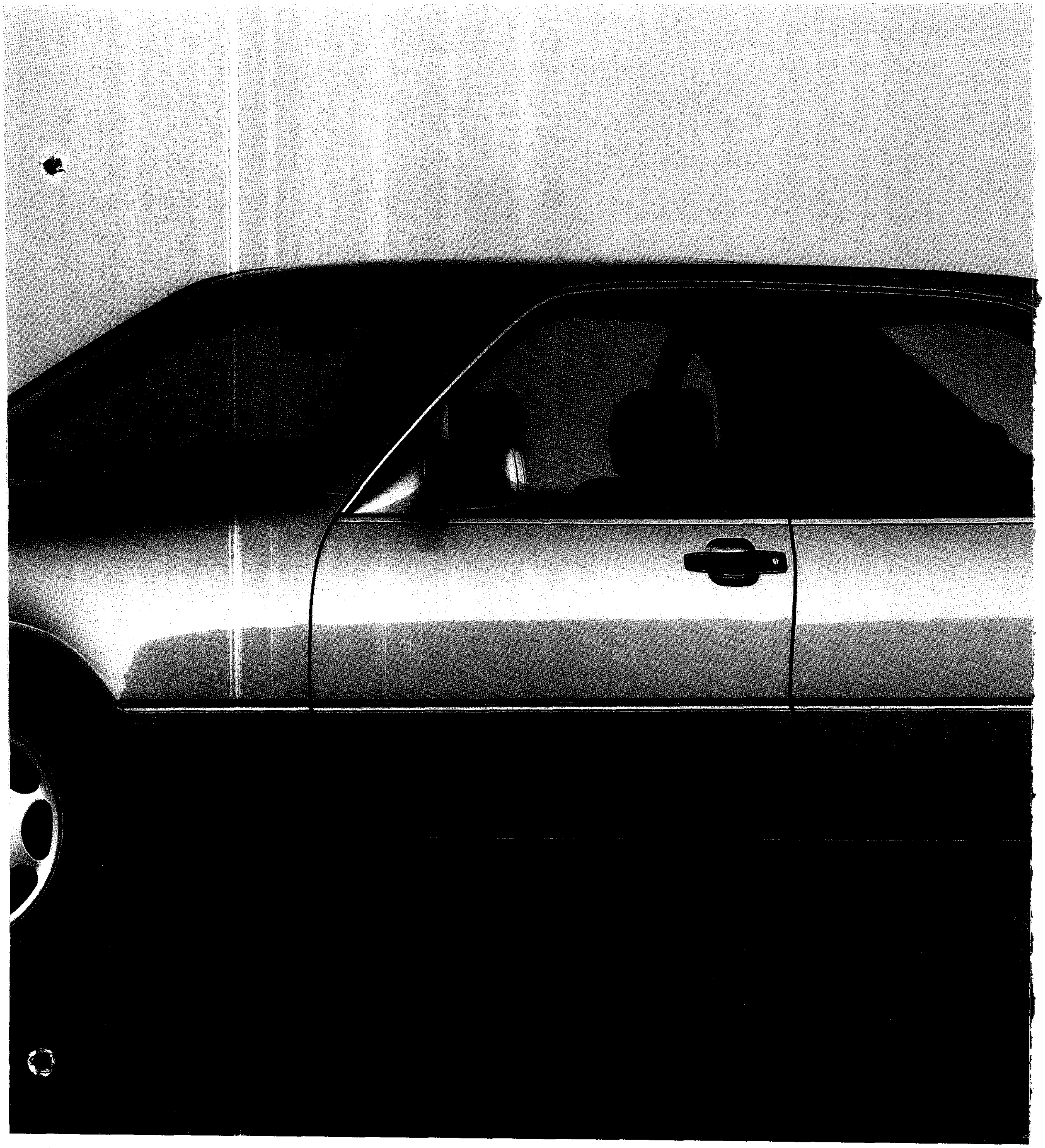


Meanwhile, standard-wheelbase 400 SE, 300 SE and 300 SD*
Sedans almost match the interior space of previous long-wheelbase models.

The extensive no-charge service provisions of the new Maintenance Plus program are standard with every 1992 S-Class.

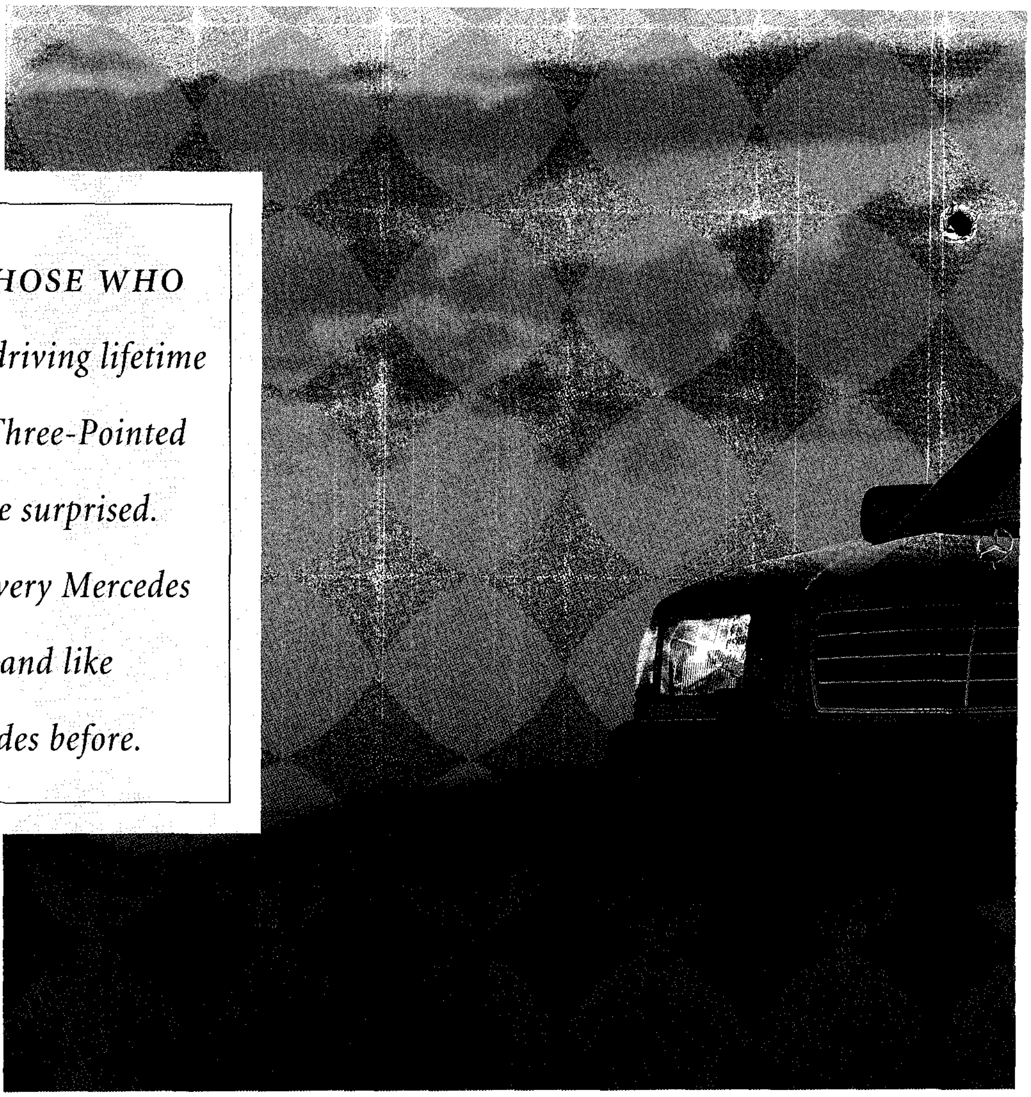
* Diesel models not available in California.

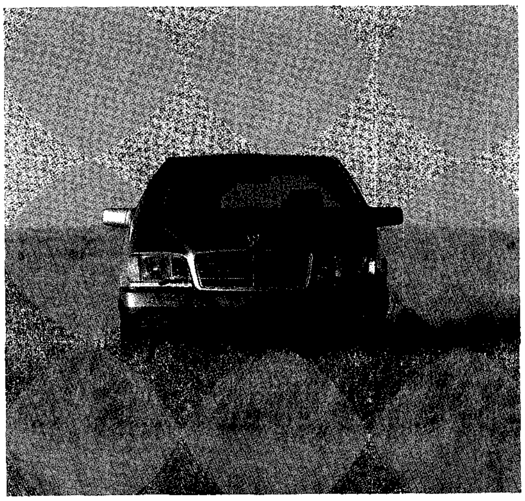


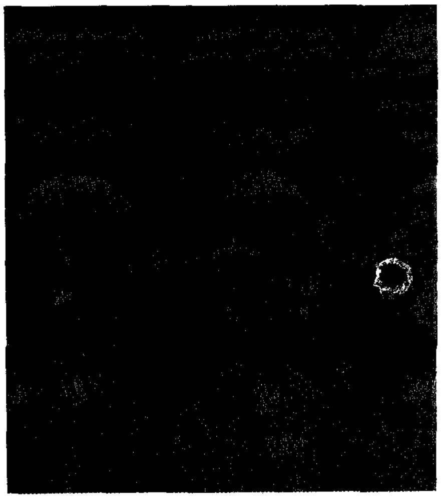
New S-Class suspension, steering and braking systems exemplify why nothing else feels like a Mercedes: nothing is engineered like a Mercedes.

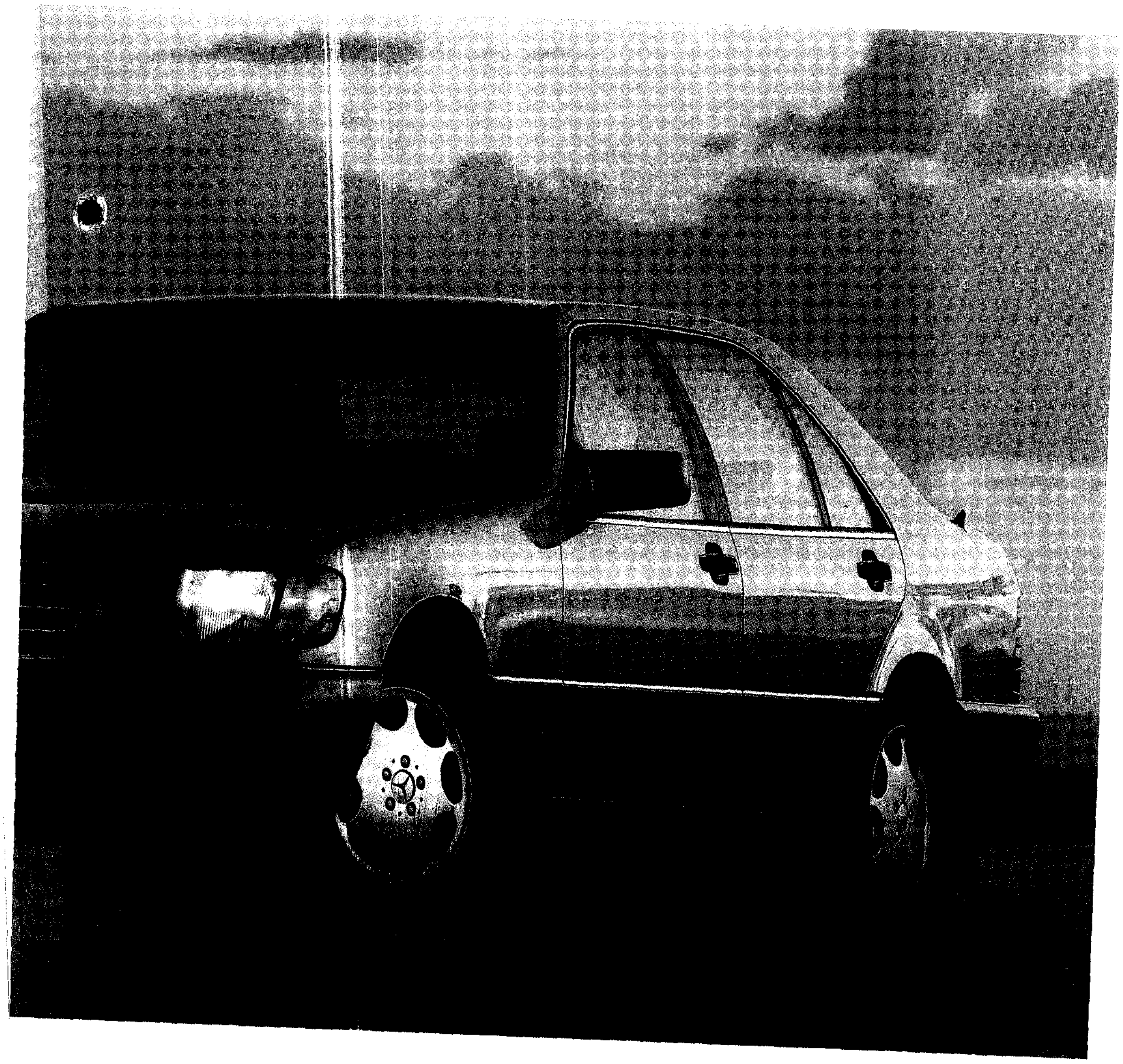
Long-wheelbase 600 SEL and 500 SEL versions of the new S-Class furnish near-limousine dimensions of rear seat living space.

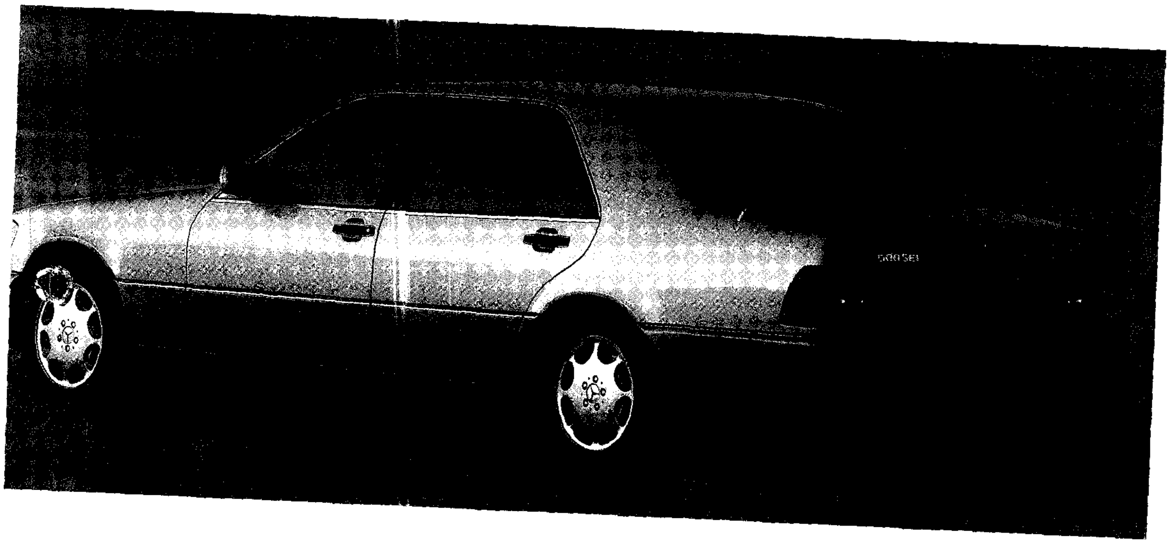
EVEN THOSE WHO *have spent a driving lifetime behind the Three-Pointed Star will be surprised. It feels like every Mercedes before, and like no Mercedes before.*

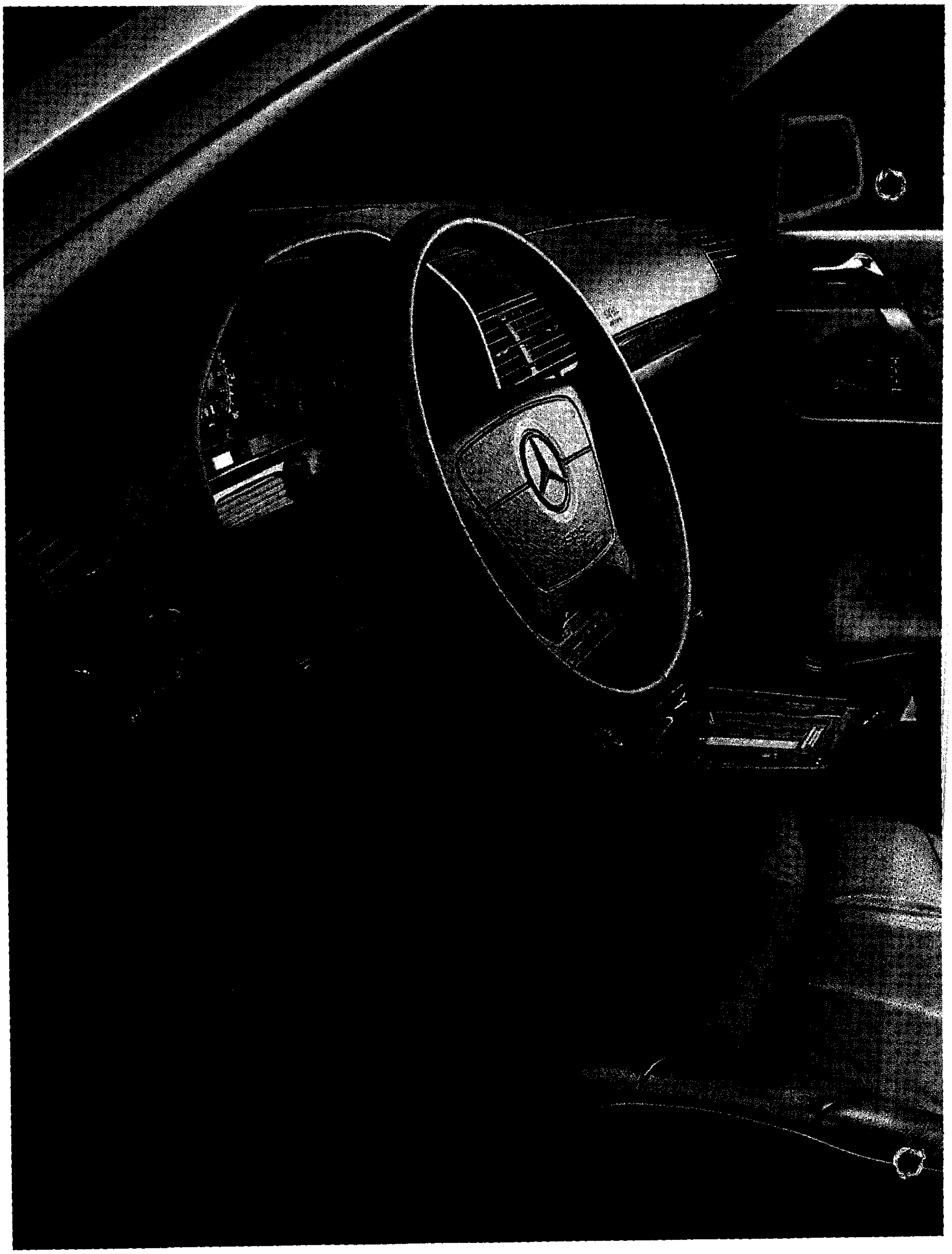









500SEL



THE CAUSE OF HUMAN COMFORT

has been pursued more deeply and more creatively in this car than in any Mercedes-Benz before. The logical dividend is deeper and more enduring comfort – physical and psychological – than you have experienced in any Mercedes-Benz before, and perhaps in any car before.

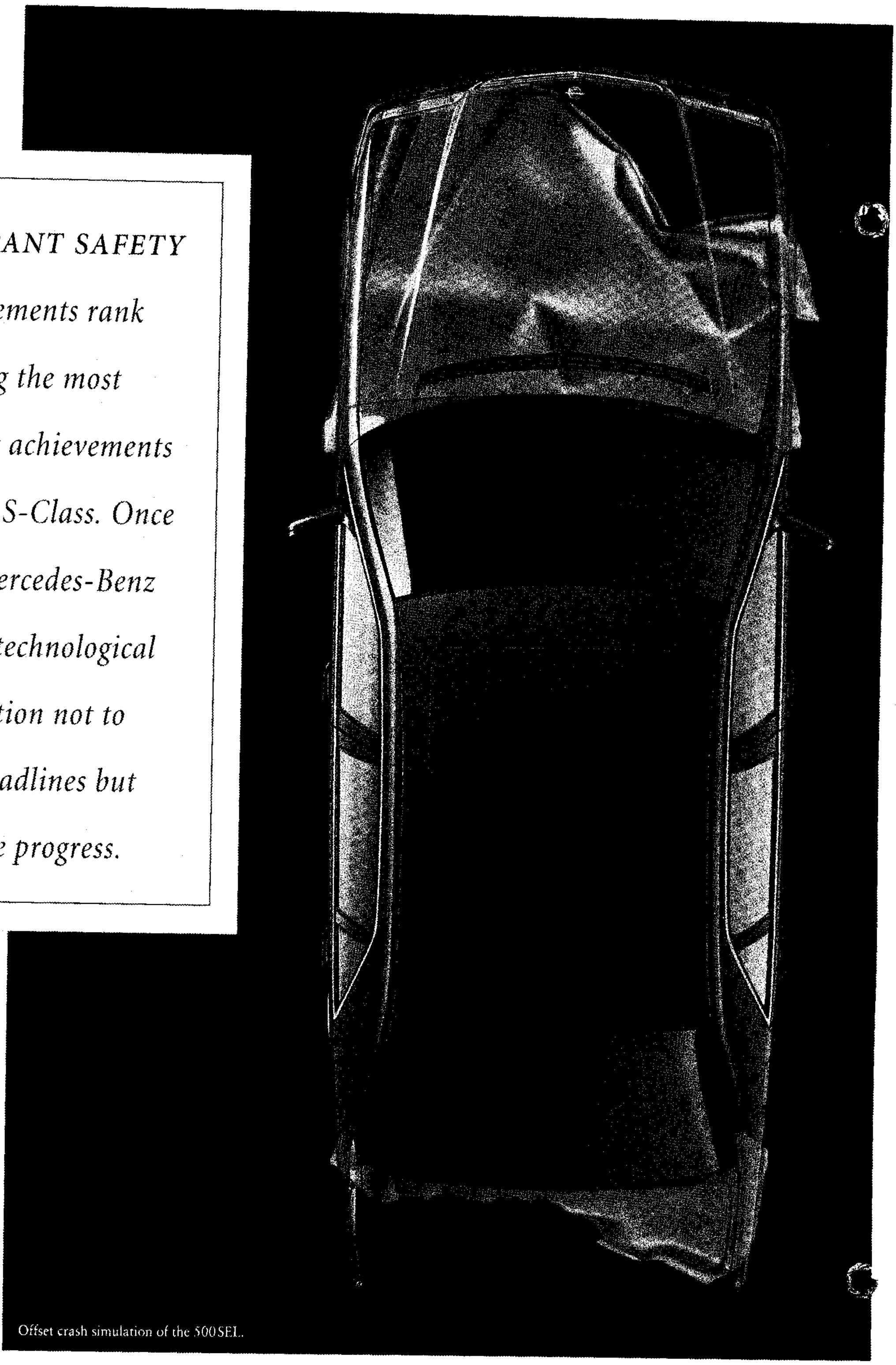
The climate control system can filter out dust, pollen and even spores of five microns in size.

Generosity of space should delight current S-Class owners and astonish everyone else.

The car adjusts to the driver: 13 different electric controls even include positioning of the interior rearview mirror.

Each front seat back incorporates four adjustable air chambers to customize lumbar back support.

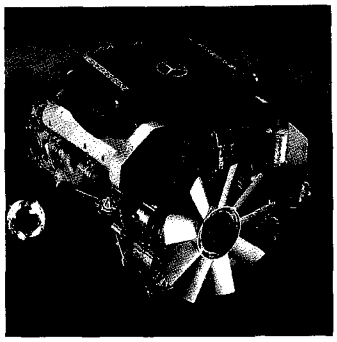
OCCUPANT SAFETY advancements rank among the most significant achievements of the new S-Class. Once again, Mercedes-Benz has used technological innovation not to make headlines but to make progress.



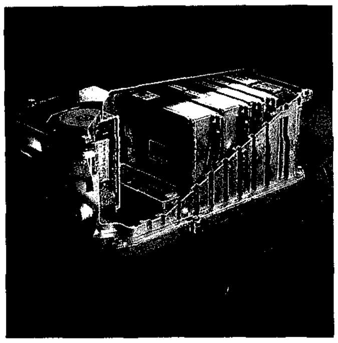
Offset crash simulation of the 500SEL.

The new S-Class sedan includes driver and front passenger air bags as part of its Supplemental Restraint System.

An even stronger central body structure, improved front and rear "crumple zones," and enhanced side-impact protection measures.

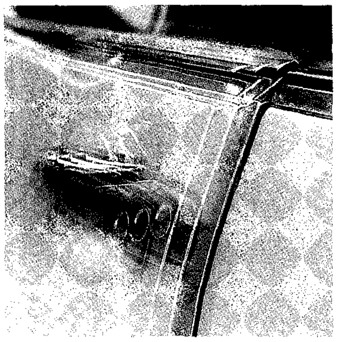


The 322-hp 32-valve 500 SEL V-8, one of a new range of high-performance V-12, V-8, and gasoline and turbodiesel sixes.



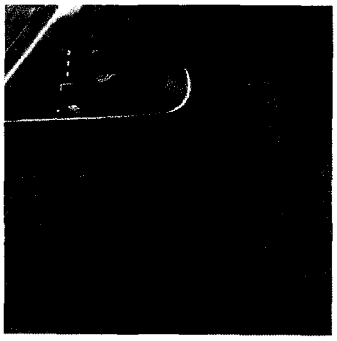
This control module is the heart of one of the most sophisticated electronic systems ever built into an automobile.

Side windows sandwich dehumidified air between two sheets of glass to seal out summer heat, winter cold and noise the year round.



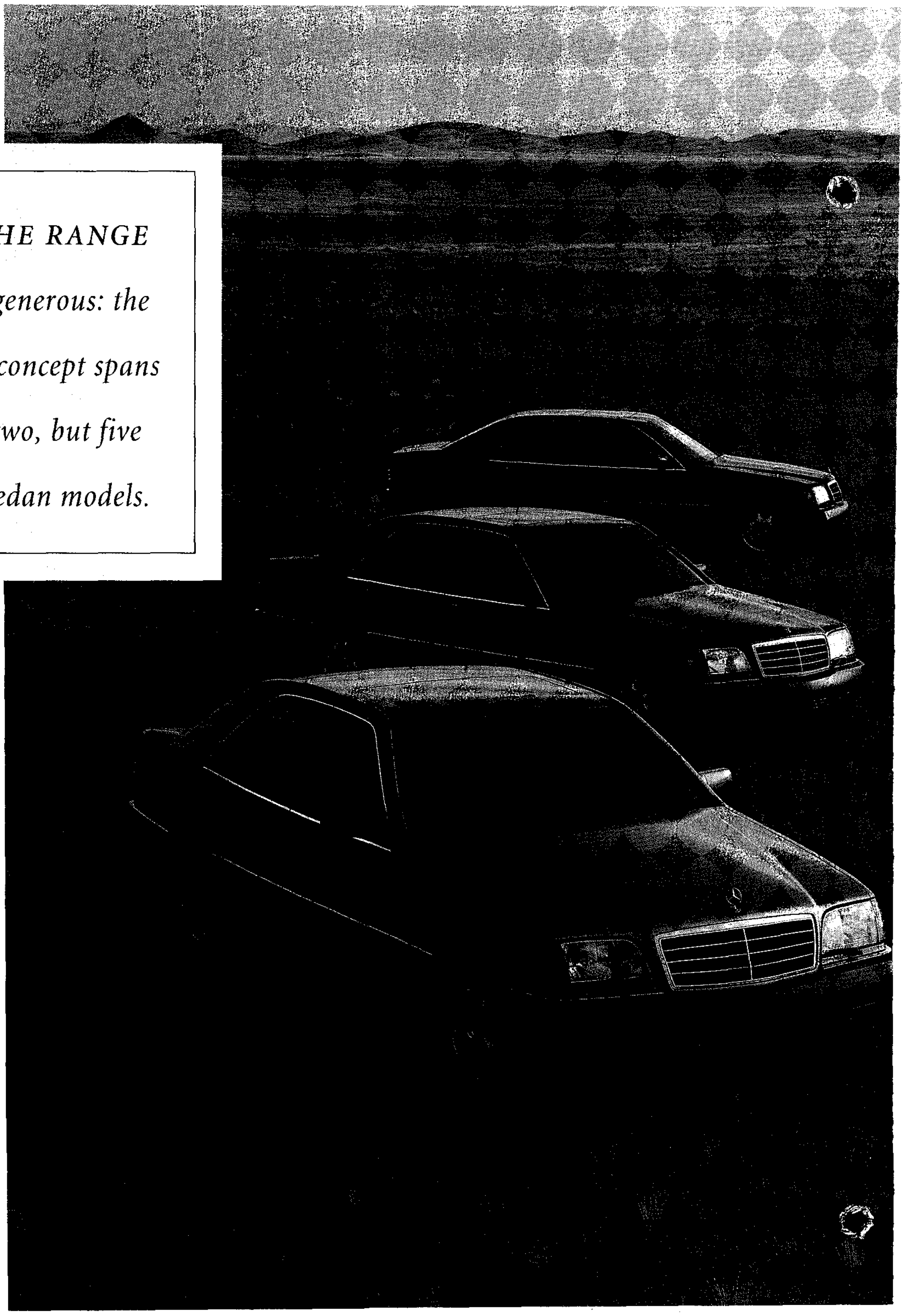
The new S-Class makes slamming doors obsolete: an electro-pneumatic device pulls the door shut when it touches the lock.

Thigh length varies among different drivers – so drivers can vary the length of the seat cushion for custom-fit support.



The Bose® Beta audio system premieres in the new S-Class: 240 watts, 11 speakers, concert-hall sound for every occupant.

EVEN THE RANGE *of choice is generous: the new S-Class concept spans not one or two, but five distinctive sedan models.*

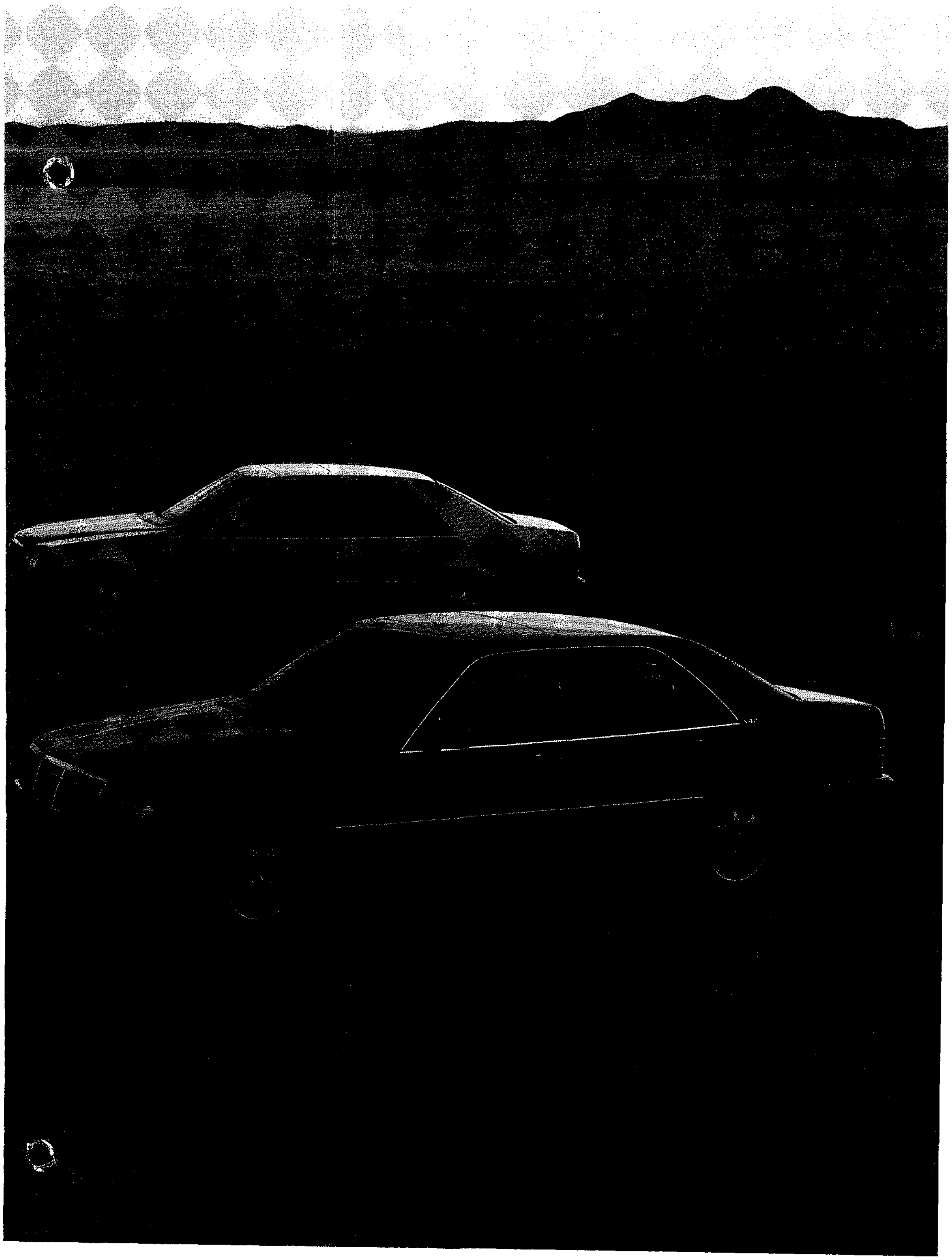


Top: the 300 SD* Turbodiesel Sedan. Turbocharged 148-hp six-cylinder engine.

Middle: the 300 SE Sedan. 228-hp 24-valve six-cylinder engine.

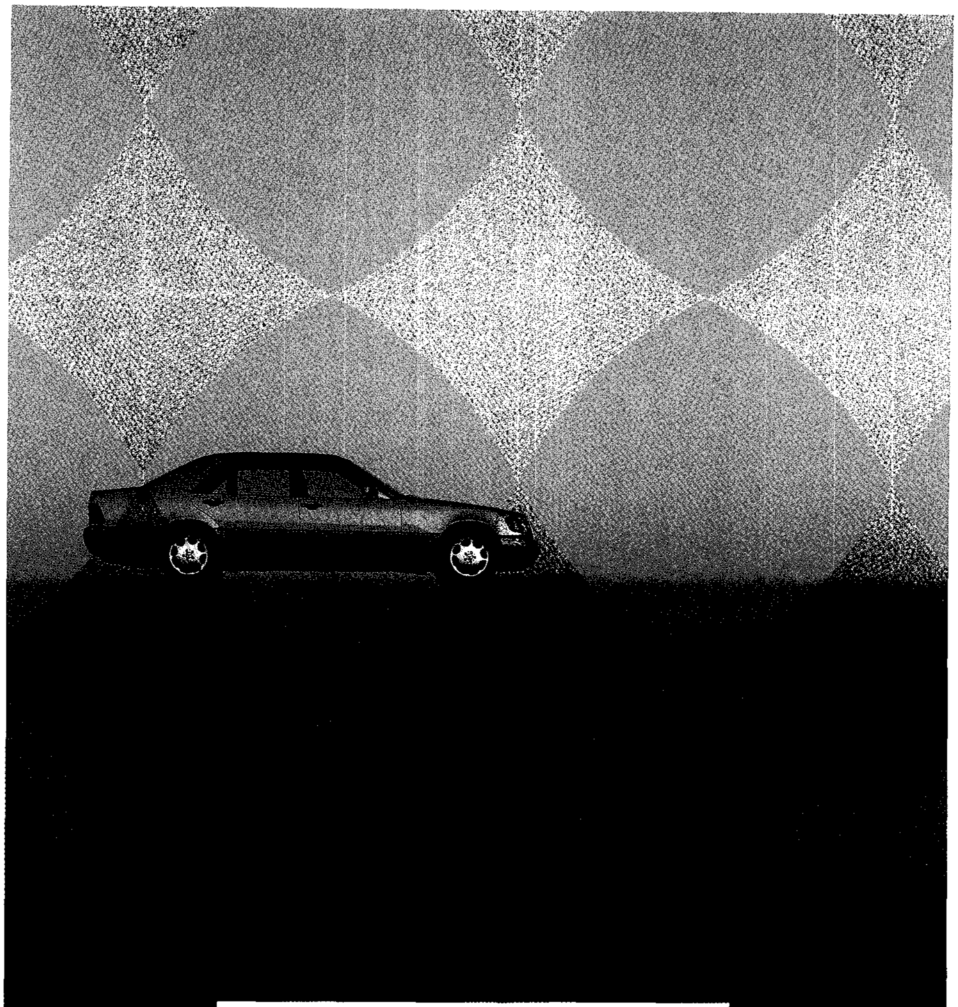
Bottom: the 400 SE Sedan. 282-hp 32-valve V-8 engine.

* Diesel models not available in California.



Top: the 500 SEL Sedan. 322-hp 32-valve V-8 engine, long wheelbase.

Bottom: the 600 SEL Sedan. 402-hp 48-valve V-12 engine, long wheelbase.



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IN BRIEF–Cont'd

West. Mitch's wife looks him in the eye, and says earnestly, "Go and find your smile"—and, ninety minutes later, there it is, a grin as big as all outdoors. His pals pick up the odd nugget of wisdom along the trail, too. The movie alternates predictable tenderfoot gags (sore behinds, stampedes, and the like) with long, ludicrous passages of group-therapy-on-the-range. Jack Palance, as Curly, the trail boss, manages some dry, macabre comic effects, and the animals are good—they're interesting to look at, and they don't make bad jokes. You can't help sympathizing with the cattle; by the time the movie is over, you know what it feels like to be part of the herd. Also with Helen Slater.—T.R. /17/91) (Worldwide Cinemas.)

A Cold Wind in August (1961)—A shrewdly conceived and well-acted piece of what might be called tawdry but frank eroticism. It's about a stripper in her late thirties who amuses herself by seducing a seventeen-year-old boy and discovers greater sexual gratification than she has ever before experienced. The boy finds out she's a stripper, is disgusted and leaves her (to play around at his own age level), and she's left in despair. That's all there is to it—or that's all there might be except for the intensity Lola Albright brings to the stripper's role. Unquestionably the movie was made as a low-budget exploitation film but it doesn't pretend to be set on a high plane, and it's saved by the honesty and clarity of its low intentions. Regrettably, in order to point up the boy's indifference to the meaning the affair has for her, he has been made too simple and callow, and although the actor (Scott Marlowe) manages to convey an emotional nature without overdoing it, Joe De Santis, who plays his good Italian papa, seems far more attractive. At least he does until the writer, Burton Wohl, who adapted his own novel, and the director, Alexander Singer, load him down with a preposterous piece of business. Papa delivers quiet words of wisdom and decency—good counsel—to his son and then sits back to read his well-thumbed leather-bound volume. It was hard to concentrate on the next scene: what *could* that book be? With Herschel Bernardi; cinematography by Floyd Crosby.—P.K. (Anthology Film Archives; Oct. 1 .)

The Commitments—Alan Parker's film is a loose, friendly musical comedy about the brief career of an Irish soul band. The Commitments are the brainchild of an energetic young music enthusiast named Jimmy Rabbitte (Robert Arkins), who lives in a poor Dublin neighborhood. He puts together a ten-piece group that learns, eventually, to play precise and spirited versions of soul classics in the Memphis style. The music of the Commitments isn't original, but that doesn't prevent it from being enormously entertaining: the band's hard-won proficiency charms us. Parker concentrates on the day-to-day details of rehearsals and performances; he seems to revel in the complexity of the group's musical, emotional, and sexual interactions, and he does full comic justice to the petty irritations of life in a band. What holds the Commitments together is a combination of Jimmy's ingenuity, their common pleasure in making music, and the daily challenge of responding to their fellow band members' provocations with quick, profane humor. The kids' verbal sparring is another kind of music—maybe the true sound of Dublin soul. Until the last half hour, when the direction gets a little pushy, the picture has an offhand, unassuming grace. Most of the Commitments are played by young Dublin musicians who answered a casting-call advertisement. They're a vivacious and spontaneous crew. The screenplay is by Dick Clement, Ian La Frenais, and Roddy Doyle, from Doyle's novel. The songs are great—chosen, with unusual intelligence, from the repertoires of Otis Redding, Aretha Franklin, Wilson Pickett, and other soul giants.—T.R. (8/26/91) (Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, and Ziegfeld.)

Crime and Punishment (1935)—Marcel Aymé's adaptation has clarity and power; the director, Pierre Chenal, uses the controversial, rather stagy technique of conveying the characters' dissociation from their environment by a slight distortion in the settings. As Raskolnikov, Pierre Blanchar is older, more eccentric than one expects: he emphasizes the tortured isolation, the near madness, of the character. It is in Harry Baur's performance as Inspector Porfiry that the film achieves its stature; Graham Greene long ago described the performance as "the finest in the cinema this year, with his tortoise movements, his streak of cruelty, his terrible good humor"—it is one of the great performances of any year. In French.—P.K. (Anthology Film Archives; Oct. 10.)

Dead Again—This murder mystery, directed by Kenneth Branagh from a wildly complicated screenplay by Scott Frank, wears its inanity on its sleeve. It shuttles breezily between the present day, in which an L.A. detective named Mike Church (Branagh) is trying to discover the identity of an attractive amnesiac (Emma Thompson), and the late forties, in which a European composer and conductor (also Branagh) may or may not have murdered his pianist wife (also Thompson). These stories are, of course, connected: the amnesiac might even be a reincarnation of the conductor's wife, stabbed to death with a pair of scissors forty years earlier. Branagh makes no attempt to disguise the script's preposterousness. He revels in it, both as actor and as director. The mood of the picture is both frivolous and spooky, and the suspense often seems a function of sheer giddiness: as the movie dances, with drunken insouciance, toward the simultaneous climaxes of its two stories, the tension we feel is partly fear that Branagh won't be able to maintain his precarious balance. Finally, the picture does come crashing down. When it's time to wrap up the mystery, the movie leaves too many of the plot's enigmas unresolved, and Branagh's insouciance loses its charm. Also with Derek Jacobi, Andy Garcia, Hanna Schygulla, and (in a hilarious cameo) Robin Williams.—T.R. (9/9/91) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, and 86th Street East Twin; through Oct. 10.)

Jean Delannoy's "Symphonie Pastorale" (playing October 10 at Anthology Film Archives) is a peak of the French "cinema of quality," the tradition of "well made" movie versions of prestigious novels that the New Wave rebelled against. It appeared in 1946, the year before André Gide won the Nobel Prize in Literature; Gide himself supervised the transformation of his 1919 novella. This devastating drama about the bond between a married Swiss minister and the wild child-like blind girl he adopts has implications that go beyond its Oedipal and marital squabbles.

Delannoy's movie chillingly captures the psychological burden of Protestantism. It shows how the need to do good works—in order to display that one exists in a state of grace—can squash or skew a believer's soul. The pastor is obsessed with the blind girl even before she develops into a beauty who attracts his son. He sees her blindness and ignorance as blessings in disguise. Her lack of sinfulness and guile uplifts him. Believing that even her earthly desires are more pure than anyone else's, he gets caught between high-flown notions of Christianity and primal urges.

With consummate control, Pierre Blanchar conveys the curate's passionate ambiguities. When the girl (Michèle Morgan) gains sight, enters his church, and sees him for the first time, Blanchar gives a stunning on-pulpit exhibition of spiritual rapture, egotism, and desire. Morgan imbues the female lead with a shy-animal quality appropriate for a person who spent years living on instinct. When blind, she learns how to make her senses and intelligence work in concert. After she's cured, emotional conflicts rupture that harmony; the pain in Morgan's eyes moves from disillusionment to universal grief.

Doc Hollywood—The cast is amiable, but the movie is routinely ingratiating. Michael J. Fox plays a plastic surgeon en route from Washington, D. C., to Beverly Hills, who crashes his '56 Porsche Speedster in Grady, South Carolina, "the squash capital of the South." There he learns about life beyond liposuction. Grady is a TV-bred baby boomer's fantasy. At times, it's Mayberry with breasts, peopled with likable eccentrics and down-home beauties—including a smart, sexy gal who plans to stay put (Julie Warner) and a live wire who's aching to get out (Bridget Fonda). At other times, it's a racially corrected version of the cultured Dixie in PBS's "The Civil War": Fox's ornery medical superior (Barnard Hughes) recites poetry, and the 58th Grady Squash Festival features a special screening of Buster Keaton's "The General." Fonda gets to ply her ticklish erotic rascality, and Woody Harrelson, as an inexplicably smoldering insurance agent, jolts every scene he's in with aberrant comic energy. But there's a jerry-built climax and a protracted post-climax. Michael Caton-Jones directed; Peter Seaman, Jeffrey Price, and Daniel Pyne wrote the script, from Laurian Leggett's adaptation of "What? . . . Dead Again?" by Neil Shulman, M.D.—M.S. (Worldwide Cinemas.)

The Doctor—Although it's sure to hook some viewers who want to see the medical establishment get knocked, this is no exposé—it's yet another story of identity crisis in the professional class, a fraternal, if not identical, twin of "Regarding Henry." William Hurt plays the surgical golden boy who develops a case of galloping humanity after he's diagnosed with throat cancer; Christine Lahti and Charlie Korsmo play his neglected wife and son; Elizabeth Perkins is the life-force who inspires him (she's suffering from a Grade IV brain tumor); and, in matched parts, Mandy Patinkin is a callous Jewish doctor (Hurt's longtime partner) and Adam Arkin is a saintly Jewish doctor (who shows Hurt correct values). The director, Randa Haines, titillates the audience with a barrage of doctors' jokes and then tries to prove that the cynical professionalism of hospital staffs is no laughing matter. In effect, the movie goes from comic shtick to problem-drama shtick, and fuses them. Hurt's performance is the type usually described as "accomplished," but what exactly does it accomplish? It's a careful embodiment of a clammed-up individual; not a hint of zest or dirt or soulfulness seeps out. The script, credited to Robert Caswell, is loosely based on "A Taste of My Own Medicine," by Ed Rosenbaum, M.D.—M.S. (Gramercy, and Sutton. . . . ¶ Village East Cinemas, and Embassy; through Oct. 8.)

Europa Europa—This superb film by the Polish director Agnieszka Holland is based on the memoirs of Salomon Perel, a German Jew who spent much of the Second World War passing for Aryan in an élite Hitler Youth academy. The movie dramatizes this almost inconceivable survival story with a surprisingly light touch. It bounds from one jaw-dropping episode to the next with the speed and the unnerving neutrality of a picaresque adventure, and never pauses to judge its ambiguous hero; it's content to let the ironies of his situation collect around him like reflections in dressing-room mirrors. His family's flight from the Nazis begins in 1938, on the eve of his bar mitzvah. Solly (played by a remarkable young actor, Marco Hofschneider) lands first in Lodz, Poland, and then in the Soviet Union, where he becomes a star pupil in a Communist school. After the Wehrmacht invades Russia and takes him prisoner, he reincarnates himself as an orphaned "pure" German, an Aryan child wandering in the barbaric eastern wilderness. By the time he is initiated into the

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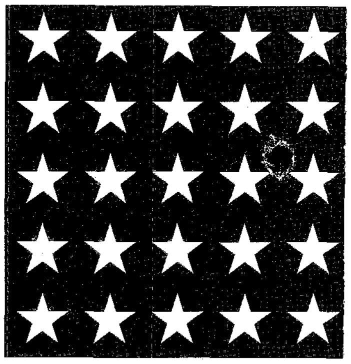
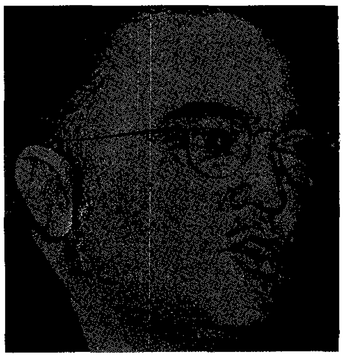




Here are some highlights from the new season:

Lyndon Johnson was one of the most powerful figures in American history. But he left office in defeat.

When America learned its favorite TV quiz shows were fixed, millions were shocked – and hurt.

Everyone knew about G-Men, but how many knew mysterious, manipulative FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover?

On December 7, 1941, our naval base at Pearl Harbor was attacked, and World War II began for Americans.

One of the bravest units in the Civil War's Union Army was the Massachusetts 54th Colored Infantry.

Carlisle School was a misguided experiment that, happily, was dropped before too much damage was done.

Boston's James Curley may have been a crook. He may have been a saint. He surely was an amazing politician.

"Duke" Ellington wrote some of the most fascinating music the world has ever heard.

Hitler Youth, he has already run through several identities, and has proved himself capable of playing his roles with conviction and enthusiasm. We remain, however, constantly aware (as he is) of what his Nazi disguise conceals—his circumcised penis, the irreversible and unambiguous sign of his identity as a Jew. Holland uses this physical evidence of Solly's Jewishness as the fulcrum of the movie's delicately balanced narrative and moral tensions. Also with Julie Delpy, Andre Wilms, Halina Labonarska, and Rene Hofschneider. The real Salomon Perel appears, as himself, in the movie's final scene. In German and Russian.—T.R. (7/1/91) (Lincoln Plaza.)

The Fisher King—This one-hundred-and-thirty-seven-minute endurance test is the story of a former New York City "shock jock" (Jeff Bridges) who befriends a schizoid former medievalist (Robin Williams) and joins his quest for the Holy Grail. The gonzo filigree of the director, Terry Gilliam, surrounds this fable of redemption with pseudo-originality. The allusion-mongering of the writer, Richard LaGravenese, gives it delusions of grandeur. At heart, the film is no different from a whole string of Hollywood movies centering on mysterious madmen who may be legendary heroes. ("The Fisher King" of twenty years ago was "They Might Be Giants," with George C. Scott as a would-be Sherlock Holmes.) As usual for this drippy kind of film, Williams' throwback character, Parry—short for Parsifal—is supposed to inspire everybody with his virtuous whimsies. But Gilliam doesn't know how to give the fantasy any sentimental charm, and he's hell on the actors, including Mercedes Ruehl as Bridges' earthy lover and Amanda Plummer as Williams' gawky amorous ideal. They mug; Gilliam takes mug shots. The movie is a peculiarly irritating failure—a leaden piece of uplift.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Gemini, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Livin' Large!—The problem with this film is thinkin' small. Michael Schultz's farce about a young black video-news freak (Terrence "T.C." Carson) who becomes "homeboy about town" for an Atlanta TV station starts out heartless yet cheerful. Carson has enough gumption and ebullience to get viewers on his side when he grabs the mike from the hand of a once haughty, now murdered black correspondent. The movie's audience is primed for a satirical "how to succeed" story in which the hero learns how the system is rigged and then outwits it. Instead, the bulk of "Livin' Large!" is a laggard black-and-white morality play: Carson repeatedly betrays his people at the behest of a ratings-hungry producer (Blanche Baker) inspired (if that's the word) by Faye Dunaway in "Network." It's a comedy of retread video jabs and duelling, dated racial clichés. Written by William Mosley Payne.—M.S. (23rd St. West Triplex, and National.)

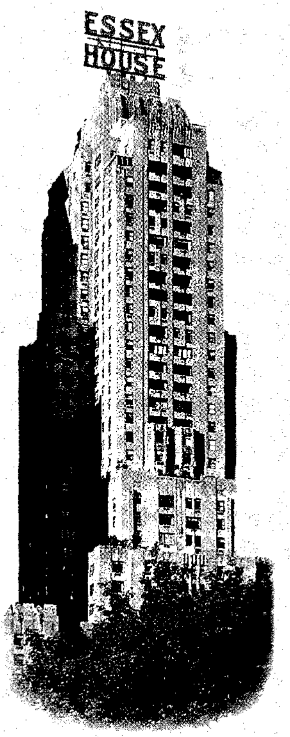
A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy (1982)—Woody Allen's overrefined reworking of Bergman's "Smiles of a Summer Night"; it has a meticulous art atmosphere and Mendelssohn on the track. This time, it's an American weekend in the country, early in the century, and Woody Allen is the host; he works on Wall Street but dabbles in inventions—small, winged contraptions for flying, and mystical devices such as a "spirit ball" for getting through to the other, unseen world. Mary Steenburgen plays his wife, and the guests are José Ferrer, a pompous-genius professor who is a freethinker in sexual matters but is contemptuous of psychic research; Mia Farrow, the prof's glamorous young fiancée; Tony Roberts, a lecherous doctor; and Julie Hagerty, a nurse who's the most trusting and gullible of all human creatures, and is avid for sex (she's the best thing in the movie). The group is rather amusing but the talk seems somnambulistic and nothing really develops. Woody Allen is trying to please but his heart isn't in it, and his talent isn't either. He is so much a man of our time that his comedy seems denatured in this classy, period setting. Written and directed by Allen; cinematography by Gordon Willis.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 13.)

My Own Private Idaho—The third feature by the independent filmmaker Gus Van Sant ("Mala Noche," "Drugstore Cowboy") is like an exploded version of the previous two, and it scatters meanings all over the landscape. It's a beautiful disaster, like a bomb test in the middle of nowhere. The movie is set primarily in Van Sant's familiar territory—the seedier parts of Portland, Oregon—and its main characters are a pair of young hustlers, Mike (River Phoenix) and Scott (Keanu Reeves), who sell their bodies on the street. Mike is a narcoleptic: every time he blacks out, he has lyrical dreams composed of imagery from his childhood. Scott, who is the son of Portland's mayor,is modelled on Shakeapeare's Prince Hal; the Falstaff character here is a scruffy gay cokehead called Bob (William Richert), and his scenes with Scott are stylized variations of incidents from both parts of "Henry IV" (hence also variations on Orson Welles' "Chimes at Midnight"). Van Sant takes a lot of cha[illegible]s, and, visually, the movie is so imaginative, so fiercely alive, that it carries us along. But when the over-all design of the picture becomes clear, we feel cheated rather than enlightened. Scott turns into a villain; Bob is ennobled as a symbol of outlaw freedom; and Mike takes on the aura of a holy fool, the Prince Myshkin of the Portland meat market. Van Sant's vision is disappointingly trite and schematic. Phoenix, however, gives a superbly intelligent and intuitive performance. Although the script ends up begging for sympathy for Mike, the actor never does. He's genuinely touching: when the young hustler wakes from one of his dream visions, we feel as though we could see the afterimages lingering on his clouded face. Also with James Russo and Udo Kier. The original screenplay is by Van Sant. Eric Alan Edwards and John Campbell did the cinematography.—T.R. (10/7/91) (Plaza, and Waverly.)

Out of the Past (1947)—A thin but well-shot suspense melodrama, kept from collapsing by the suggestiveness and intensity that the director, Jacques Tourneur, pours on. It's empty trash, but you do keep watching it. Kirk Douglas, a gangster, hires Robert Mitchum to find Jane Greer, who has run away from him. Predictably, she gets Mitchum (at his most somnolent-sexy droopy-eyed) in her clutches, and there are several killings before matters are resolved. The screenplay is by Geoffrey Homes (a pseudonym of Daniel Mainwaring), from his novel "Build My Gallows High." Cinematography by Nicholas Musuraca; with Rhonda Fleming and Dickie Moore.—P.K. (Anthology Film Archives; Oct. 13.)

Paris Is Burning—Jennie Livingston's documentary about gay black and Latino men who compete in drag balls is a beautiful piece of work—lively, intelligent, exploratory. The drag queens we see here seem to be holding up a mirror to the world of the empowered as they see it in movies, TV shows, and magazines. In the ballroom, some present themselves as elegant, glamorous women in designer outfits, and walk with the hip-swinging slouch of runway models, while others adopt more mundane personas: college students (of both sexes); military men; Wall Street businessmen; aristocrats at play, dressed for yachting or riding to hounds. The criteria by which all these turns are judged is verisimilitude—"realness." The material is almost too rich, too suggestive. Everything about the ball culture signifies so blatantly and so promiscuously that the movie induces a kind of semiotic daze. Livingston is smart enough not to reduce her subjects to the sum of their possible meanings, perhaps because she realizes that the way the drag performers manipulate image and fetishes and the iconography of popular culture is for many of them a sophisticated form of humor. The most self-aware of the gay men in this picture revel in the ironies of their social and sexual identities, and Livingston makes us appreciate the comic grace and the strange wisdom of that approach. Like all the best documentary filmmakers, she does her subjects the honor of allowing them to retain some of their mystery. Edited by Jonathan Oppenheim.—T.R. (3/25/91) (Eastside Cinema, and Quad Cinema.)

The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe—Trudy, a crazy bag lady, has taken upon herself the task of showing visiting extraterrestrials the variety of life on earth. She has an umbrella hat that picks up signals from everywhere and turns her into a living TV set, with lots of channels and great



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reception. She's played by Lily Tomlin, and every person whose life flashes onto Trudy's psychic screen is played by Lily Tomlin, too. Tomlin gives us a clear, sharp picture every time: she's a high-definition actress. This astonishing one-woman show, presented on Broadway in 1985, was written for Tomlin by her longtime collabotator Jane Wagner. The belated film version, directed by John Bailey, adds some distracting visual effects, but it mostly does justice to the extraordinary talents of these women. Nothing interferes with the dazzling rhythm of Tomlin's performance, and the piece is constructed so that its themes build up an inexorable momentum. The characters who flash across the screen turn out, in the end, to be connected to each other in ways we couldn't have anticipated. And it's immensely gratifying to see all the different personalities gathered together in one woman. This is probably the only solo theatrical performance that truly deserves to be called democratic.—T.R. (10/7/91) (57th St. Playhouse.)

Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll—A one-man show in which Eric Bogosian plays, in succession, ten characters, none of whom interact with or refer to any of the others; each inhabits his own eerily self-contained world. The surprising thing about this acting tour de force is that its radically disparate parts really add up to something: in rock-and-roll terms, it's a concept album, not just a collection of singles. This picture, directed (erratically) by John McNaughton, was filmed in concert-movie style, with multiple cameras and before a paying crowd, and Bogosian looks relaxed and confident. In the past, his performances often felt desperate, coercive; he seems more willing now to allow the audience some freedom in responding to his characters. There's a real progression in the course of the film, from characters who provoke immediate, visceral reactions to characters whose effect on us is more ambiguous. Bogosian warms us up with surefire stuff to prepare us for the riskier, more demanding material in the final part of the show. His last three monologues are the funniest in the movie—probably the finest work he has ever done.—T.R. (9/23/91) (Angelika Film Center, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Slacker—There is no joy in Austin—at least not in the seedy collegiate neighborhood of Richard Linklater's enervating piece of local colorlessness. There's precious little originality, either, despite the resolute nonconformity of Linklater's neo-beatnik characters. Each follows the familiar beat of a different bongo. Sociopaths, Elvis, the J.F.K. assassination, the Lincoln Brigade, Madonna—the same topics come up off campus in Austin as in Cambridge, Mass., or Madison. What's worse, the sophomoric surrealism of the slackers' dialogue is all that Linklater gives you to hang onto. With dozens of one-shot characters who take over for a scene, then pass the baton to the next no-brain, the structure begs comparison to Buñuel's late black comedies, like "The Phantom of Liberty." But watching this movie is more like being stranded in the switchboard of a nightmare party line. It's tempting to call the film a straightfaced satire, but that would give it too much credit. There's nothing inside Linklater's deadpan.—M.S. (Angelika Film Center.)

Splendor in the Grass (1961)—William Inge wrote the baroque primer-Freud screenplay about the frustrations of adolescent sexuality, set in a small town in Kansas in the twenties, and Elia Kazan whipped it up. The picture is hysterically on the side of young love, and this hysteria seems integral to the film's moments of emotional power, its humor, and its beauty. Natalie Wood and Warren Beatty are high-school sweethearts whose parents think they are too young to marry. And so, deprived of love together, the boy turns to a floozy and the girl, maddened by loss of him, goes to a mental institution. The parents are the mean, hypocritical monsters you expect in this sort of youth-slanted picture that pretends to deal with real adolescent problems but actually begs the issue by having the two kids tenderly in love; the movie doesn't suggest that adolescents have a right to sexual experimentation—it just attacks the corrupted grownups for their failure to value love above all else. It's the old corn, fermented in a new way, with lots of screaming and a gang-bang sequence and girls getting pawed on their twitching little schoolgirl behinds. The extraordinary cast includes Sandy Dennis, Barbara Loden, Zohra Lampert, Pat Hingle, Martine Bartlett, Audrey Christie, Fred Stewart, Gary Lockwood, Phyllis Diller as Texas Guinan, and Inge himself as the reverend.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Oct. 12 and 14.)

Terminator 2: Judgment Day—The killer cyborg who was played by Arnold Schwarzenegger in the original "Terminator" (1984) has returned—only this time he's the hero. The first film, which was written and directed by James Cameron, is one of the genre-movie classics of the eighties: a lean, witty science-fiction movie without great pretensions to significance. The sequel, also written (with William Wisher) and directed by Cameron, is far less satisfying. The picture is full of spectacular action sequences and dazzling special effects, but the narrative doesn't have the snap of the original's: it's lumbering and monotonous, and it carries a heavy-handed anti-nuke message. The old, Schwarzenegger-model Terminator (the T-800) has been superseded by a more advanced model, the T-1000 (Robert Patrick), who is sleeker and more versatile. T-800, who represented the ultimate in destructive technology in the first film, seems almost human here: compared to T-1000, he's a vulnerable guy (or guyoid). The whole movie is based on the insane conceit that Arnold Schwarzenegger is the *underdog*. That's a stretch. Also with Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Joe Morton. Effects by Stan Winston and many, many others.—T.R. (7/29/91) (Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Loews 19th Street East 6; Oct. 7.)

Trust—This independent film by the young writer and director Hal Hartley ("The Unbelievable Truth") takes place entirely in a white, middle-class neighborhood in a forlorn-looking Long Island town. His Long Island is a place where anything can happen and almost nothing does—where parents and childen, living together in tight quarters, torment and negotiate with each other just to create some drama for themselves. This picture tells the story of the strange relationship—part romance, part tutorial, part vaudeville act—between a pair of suburban losers, Matthew (Martin Donovan) and Maria (Adrienne Shelly). He's a thirtyish, chain-smoking depressive who lives with his widowed father (John MacKay). She's an adolescent bimbo who, when she announces to her family and her boyfriend that she's pregnant, discovers that this persona isn't going to be much use to her; she decides that she has to change her life. The story moves by surprising leaps, with the rhythm of the main characters' erratic, uncertain progress toward an awareness of possibilities beyond their limited, cramped experience. Hartley keeps the film's tone dry, and makes the threatening, pervasive nothingness of the milieu grotesquely funny. His style is a risky blend of formal abstraction and dramatic realism, and it demands resourceful actors. Donovan has a gangling, dishevelled charm, and his bummed-out line readings are superbly timed; and Shelly brings off Maria's transformation from teen-age temptress to serious young woman with extraordinary ease. Under Hartley's direction, they seem to be inventing an acting style for a brand-new genre: the existentialist comedy of manners. Also with Merritt Nelson, Edie Falco, and Gary Sauer.—T.R. (8/12/91) (Worldwide Cinemas. . . . ¶ Angelika Film Center;. through Oct. 10)

Voyage Surprise (1946)—The Prévert brothers—director Pierre and scenarist Jacques—got together on this offhand comedy, and there's nothing comparable to its poetic eccentricity in other French movies of the period; the humor suggests early Marx Brothers, but the improvisatory style is that of Mack Sennett two-reelers, or a looser, more amateurish version of René Clair's "The Italian Straw Hat." It can be tedious, but it has a loony, antique grace. In competition with a tourist bureau, a mad old man (Sinoël) collects a busload of uninhibited people, and they go on a "mystery" tour—the route and destination unknown. The surprises follow: they become fugitives from the law; they spend a night in a sumptuous brothel; they are mistaken for a theatrical troupe. Kosma did the music. With Martine Carol, and the dwarf Pierre Piéral, who's like a miniature Bette Davis. In French.—P.K. (Public Theatre; Oct. 10.)

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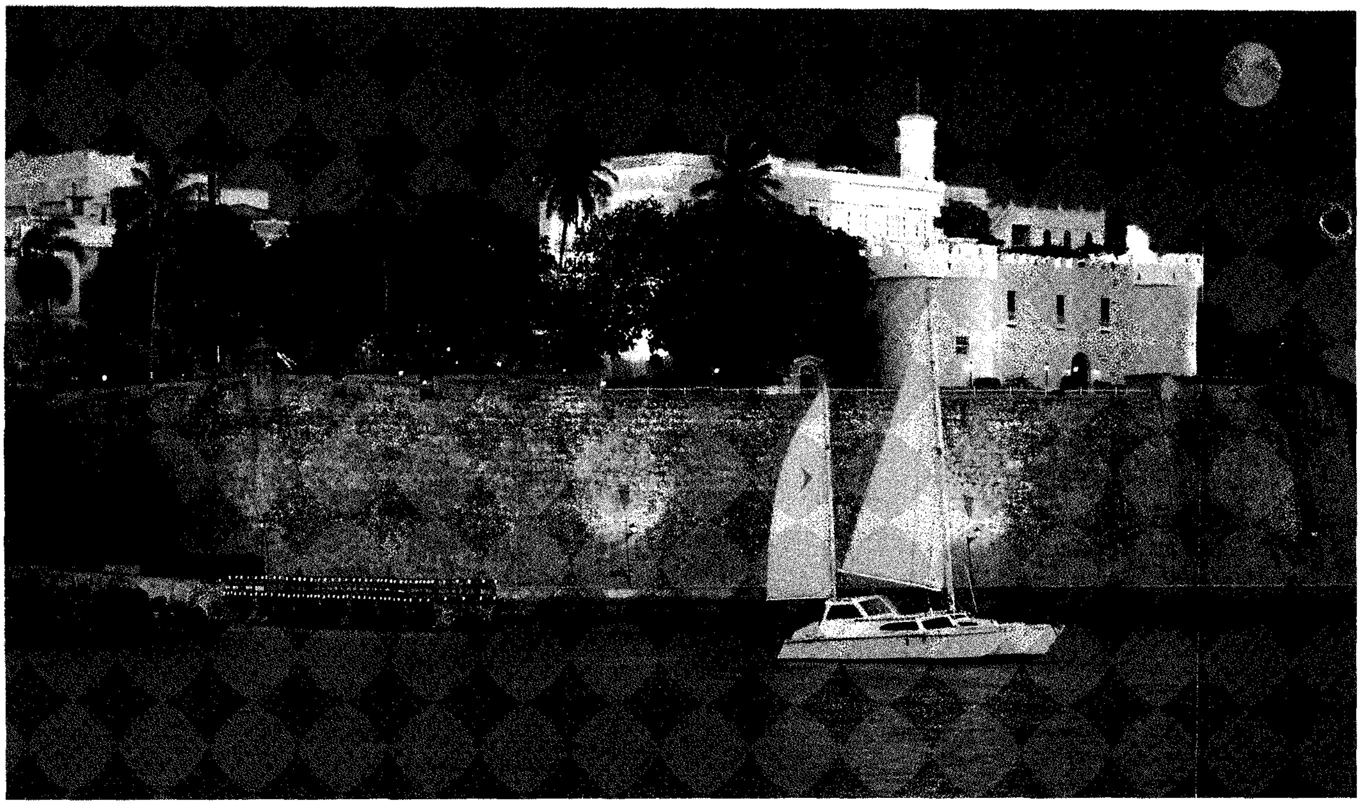

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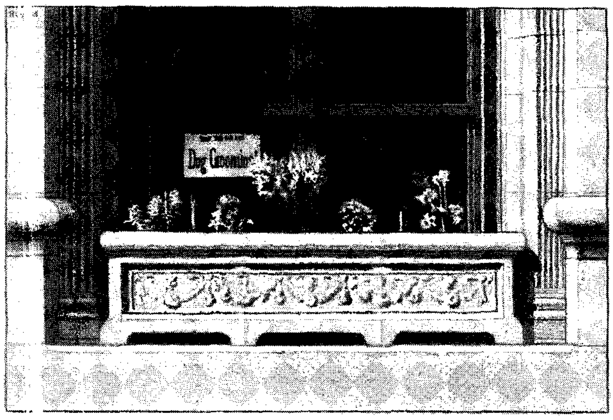
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

WHAT, exactly, is everyone so sore about? The other evening, we walked up to Alice Tully Hall to watch a couple of movies at the Film Festival. It was a fairly middle-of-the-road program—movies about movies (a new Austrian documentary about the old Austrian director G. W. Pabst, and a new French documentary about the old French director Jacques Demy) and, for a curtain-raiser, a three-minute short made by a couple of young Austrian filmmakers. The directors of the short film were on the premises; they came out from the wings, looking solemn in black, and took a stiff bow. The audience paid hardly any attention to them; what's called a scattering of applause sounded in the auditorium. Then the film ran. It was standard, run-of-the-mill experimental cinema, almost touching because so old-fashioned—three minutes of blurry gray stuff and blurry white stuff. An art movie—or maybe a *comment* on the art movie, we thought. (Afterward, someone explained to us that the film's subject was skiing.) The moment the film ended, the audience began to boo; it turned on that little film with a deep, lusty exhalation of self-righteous anger. Hisses filled the hall. Then the audience chuckled in self-congratulation, and sat back to wait for the next movie.



As we listened to those boos and hisses and chuckles, it seemed to us that we had been hearing sounds of the same kind all over town recently. It isn't anything like the old sounds of big-town jeering—the sounds that the Yankee Stadium crowd used to make back in the seventies and early eighties, for example. The Stadium crowd was contemptuous, but at least it was impassioned. The fans booed too much, but they cheered too much, too, and they didn't jeer slight or insignificant failure—they let the small fry go, and jumped on Reggie. They were getting even for the excessive money and outsize attention the ballplayers were receiving; the booing was ugly, but it had a populist undercurrent. The new booing is directed, generally, on behalf of the powerful, or even in alliance with the powerful, against the essentially powerless. It's a form of bullying. Last month, out at Flushing Meadow, Jimmy Connors, a millionaire athlete whose loutishness has hardly decreased with age—a man still inclined to greet every momentary advantage with a paroxysm of childish glee—was greeted as a model sportsman, and when he berated the earnest umpire on a borderline call the crowd beat up on the umpire along with him: a chorus of backup bullies harmonizing with the star bully.

Anger is to our time what angst was to the nineteen-fifties. We have Death Metal. We have Hate Radio. There are entrepreneurs of anger, like Guns N' Roses and Public Enemy, and connoisseurs of anger, like those music critics who admire them. Some of this anger, we are instructed by the critics, is good anger—admirable anger, aesthetic anger. It is good anger, this argument goes, because it's directed at real grievances: a lot of the new musicians get steamed, and chant out their hatreds or scream out their desire to beat women, because they're indignant at the hopelessness of the ghetto or the sterility of the mall. But if that's the case why does the rage cut right across the whole city, the whole society? Why do you hear it all over town? The other morning, for instance, the *Post* put the news of the firing of the Mets' manager, Buddy Harrelson, on the front page. Buddy, as everyone recalls, is a blue-collar, outer-borough New York hero twice over: he was one of the Miracle Mets, and he was also, in 1973, the scrappy little guy who stood up to Pete Rose. The Mets had a disappointing year under Buddy, but then most years in baseball are disappointing; this one came after a number of good years and seemed to conform to a general rule of life—things run in cycles. But the headline on the *Post* read "WIMPS!" and subheads said "New York's fed up with losers. . . . Met fans glad Buddy got ax." On the turnover page, the story began, "Bye, Buddy, and don't let the door hit you on the way out."

This kind of universalized tantrum has even taken over the White House. These days, the President's outbursts are collected and analyzed by the press corps as though they were the most telling expression of his personality. The tantrum is to the Bush Presidency what the funny story was to the Reagan Presidency. The proof of President Bush's authority seems to be evidenced not so much in his ability to act (to send armies across oceans, to cut off funds to a small country) as in his ability to *act out.* The President is "fed up" with Saddam, the press tells us; he is "truly enraged" with the Israeli government; his displays of anger are "impressive," "heartfelt," "sudden and surprising." His anger has become his badge of office. Sometime in 1988, Mr. Bush discovered that an apparent loss of self-discipline and self-control did not (as he must have been brought up to believe) make him look weak and second-rate; it made him look stronger, and the people loved it. The Gulf War was, in its way, the ultimate tantrum war. When it was all over, nothing much had changed (a year later, the same sorry constellation of figures is still more or less in place) except that we had demonstrated "credibility"—that is, our capacity to stage another tantrum someplace else.

Our anger right now appears to arise not from a feeling of weakness, exactly, but from a frustrated recognition that loss is the norm even for the strong and the rich. We have abandoned the illusion of perpetual progress without acquiring, in return, a respect for the fluctuations of fortune and the complexity of life. President Bush, unable to do anything about education or drugs or the national debt, gets sore at the world. New Yorkers talk to Hate Radio because they can't think what to do about Crown Heights. Connors lost in the end, just as we knew he would, and the Mets turned out this fall to be no better than we had expected in the spring—they were worse, in fact. But what we seem to have concluded from these letdowns isn't that life is hard but that there must be somebody out there we can blame.

• •

Ossies

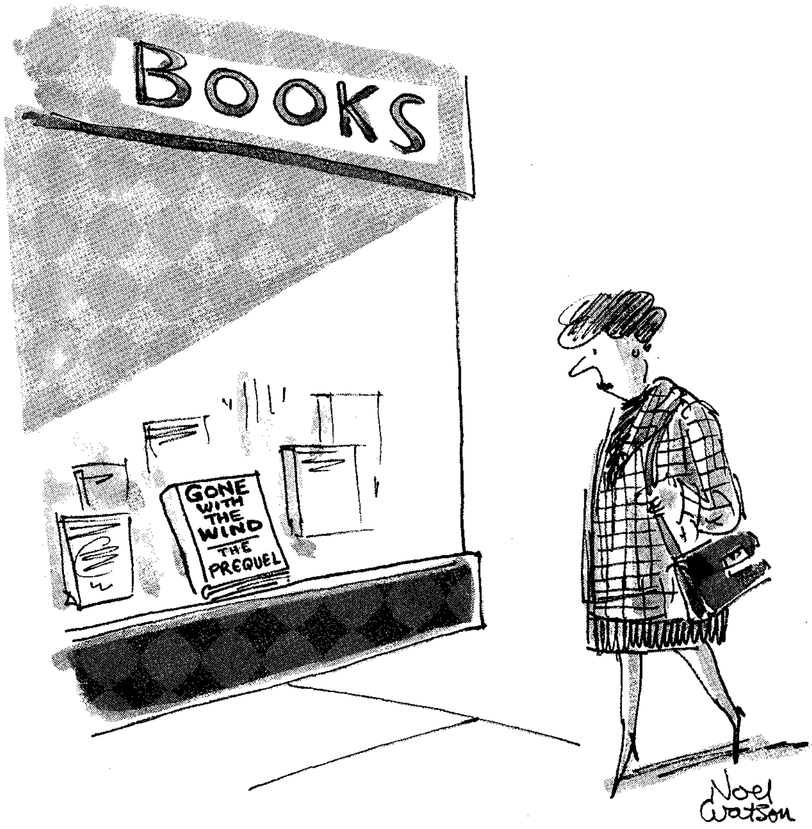
A WOMAN we know writes:

My friend Gunnar called last weekend from Dresden to say that he had just got back from the Soviet Union. Gunnar has owned a bar in Dresden for over a year now, but he is not an East German; he is a West German, from Hanover, and he moved east after the Wall came down. This summer, when Gunnar visited New York with his thirteen-year-old son, Max, he told me all about Dresden. "If you are sitting in an outdoor café in Dresden, it is sometimes impossible to see your friends sitting in the café across the street from you, because of the car exhaust," he said. "They haven't had any environmental regulations in East Germany for forty years. The air pollution and water pollution are awful. Things are awful in general. But it's O.K. It's still better than West Germany. I like the East Germans, the Ossies, better. They are more real. When I moved, some of my friends said I didn't know what I was doing. But I thought, It's not enough to have confidence in the East—I must see for myself this land that touches mine, and try to make it work."

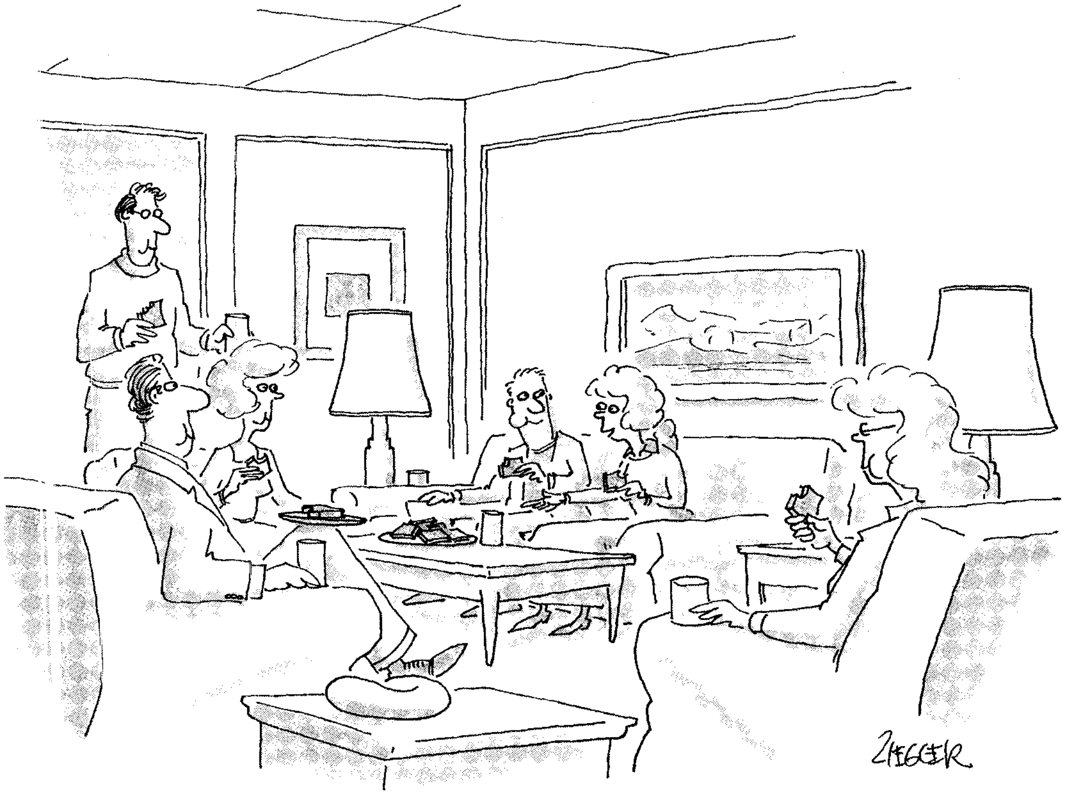
Tall, blond, calm, slow of speech, Gunnar seems in many ways a typical German. Upon meeting him, you would never guess, for example, that his nose is entirely artificial. Last New Year's Eve, after he'd been in business in Dresden for six months, his bar was raided by skinheads. Gunnar showed up while they were smashing the place with clubs and boards, and in the resulting fight he lost his nose. But it was reconstructed, and so was his bar—Café 100, which has a hundred and twenty-five kinds of wine and, Gunnar claims, the best jazz in East Germany. "Right now, I would say we're already one of the top clubs in Dresden," he told me during his visit.

Gunnar and his girlfriend, Katrin, had originally planned to go to Italy this September, but after the failed coup attempt in the Soviet Union they changed their minds and took a train to Smolensk. "This is my feeling," he said on the phone. "There is no more Soviet Union, none. This is a wonderful thing, but a difficult thing, too. It makes me nervous when I see new nations arising in Eastern Europe. I think we must all live together with each other somehow. So I had to visit Russia, to understand where I am now. Besides, I wanted to see Lenin's tomb while it was still there. We wanted to go by train so we could see the land, and see how we were connected, and meet and talk to people."

In Smolensk, Gunnar and Katrin met some Moldavians. "They were young people, and they told us that they wanted Germans to come in and build up their country the way they were building up East Germany," Gunnar said. "Many others in Smolensk said the same thing. It was incredible! It was hard for me to understand how in Smolensk—a city that the Germans annihilated in the Second World War—the people would be so friendly to us. They even said, 'Well, Stalin killed more perhaps than Hitler.' And every-


BOOKS
GONE WITH THE WIND THE PREQUEL
Noel Watson

where we went people told us the same thing: they wanted the Germans and the Americans to come in and fix their country for them.



‘Who could have imagined that such a wonderful recipe for brownies would be hidden away in the Dead Sea Scrolls?”

“We took a taxi to the Ukraine. Three hundred kilometres for twenty marks. In Kiev, we stayed with a woman we had met on the street. She insisted that we come in and stay with her family, and wouldn’t let us go to a hotel. The Soviet people were wonderful—they are so *gastfreundlich*. I have never experienced anything like it. Everywhere we went, they invited us to dinner, and we did not stay in a single hotel during our trip. In every city, we met people who invited us to stay with them. And we ate well! I don’t know how they did it, but they prepared feast after feast for us. We did see a good amount of food in the markets, but it was very expensive. The people we met seemed very optimistic. Many of them told us that they hated Communism and were glad that the monuments to Lenin were being destroyed. There is a very big statue of Lenin in Kiev. They told us that it would take two months to remove the statue but they would do it. The woman we stayed with in Kiev was against the idea that the Ukraine should be its own country. She said she thought the Ukrainians would be better off staying with Russia. And many of the other people we talked to in Kiev felt the same way. But we also saw a demonstration in Kiev by people who wanted the Ukraine to secede. In my eyes, those people were real nationalists—that was one of the worst things I saw.

“Then we took a flight from Kiev to Moscow, for two marks and eighty cents. The people in Moscow were friendly, too, and they also told us they wanted the West to come in and build up their country. We talked with an elevator operator. He said, ‘Russia is a rich country—we have gold and oil and wheat and land—but we don’t know how to work. We never learned how. All we know how to do is drink.’ ” Gunnar laughed. “I think he may be right. Once, in Moscow, Katrin and I went to a restaurant, and two Russians came and sat with us. The whole place was empty—all the tables were free—but they came and sat with us. In Germany, if you get on a train, for example, you look for a compartment where there are empty seats and you sit there. In the Soviet Union, I think, it is exactly the opposite. They get on a train and look for a compartment where all the seats are taken, and they sit there. Russians can’t sit alone; they need contact. So these Russians sat and ate with us, and, among the four of us, we finished two litres of vodka and four bottles of Russian champagne. *Ganz phantastisch!* The champagne is as good as French champagne, or even better, I find.”

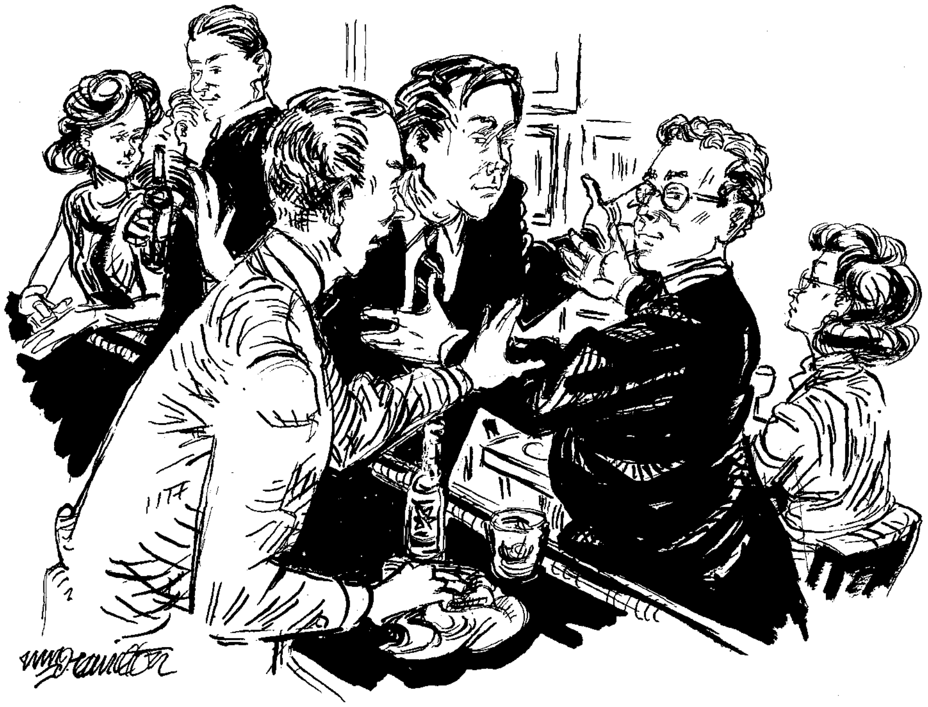
Gunnar is a firm believer in liberal ideals, within the family as well as within and between nations. He has Max call him Gunnar, rather than Papa, because he is too egalitarian to permit a family hierarchy. When Gunnar married, fourteen years ago, he and his wife tossed a coin to see whose last name they would use. She won. The marriage broke up three years ago, and Gunnar has gone back to his bachelor name; Max still has his mother’s, and he is in his mother’s custody. “It was too bad,” Gunnar said of the custody arrangement. “Because I was like a mother to him. I used to carry him around in one of those baby packs, all around Hanover, while his mother was getting her degree. He went everywhere with me. But I go back often to Hanover—once, twice a month—to see him.”

During their stay in New York, I overheard one of their family discussions. Max wanted to get a pair of white jeans—a kind that the tough kids in Hanover are wearing, the kids who are flirting with militarism or nationalism or other isms that Gunnar mistrusts—and he asked, “*Verbietest du es, dass ich sie kaufe?*” (“Do you forbid it, that I get these jeans?”)

Gunnar felt sure that the question had been put to his ex-wife as well, and so he had a chance now to be a hero or a villain by comparison. But he said to Max, “I don’t forbid it. I don’t forbid you things—you know that. But I don’t think it is a good thing. I don’t like what it stands for." Max decided he didn't want the jeans after all.

Now that Gunnar has had a chance to see the shape of the lands to the east of Germany, he is not entirely pleased with the direction things are taking. "Everything is changing," he told me. "It's only a month since the coup, and there are already signs above the shops in Moscow in Roman letters instead of Cyrillic. My impression is that in ten years what used to be the Soviet Union will be like America. The people there will have a totally free market without any real social programs. I have the impression that everyone wants to make money. I think it's already different there. What I fear most is that the capitalists will take over Moscow. The modern people there seem to me more American than European. I imagine that within ten years life in Moscow will be as hectic as life in New York. And I worry that the people will lose their culture if the Americans and the Germans come in to build up the country. It works so fast, you see. When I moved to Dresden, in 1990, it was still an Eastern Bloc country. My apartment last year cost a hundred and eighty marks a month, about a hundred dollars. It was huge—two hundred and sixty square metres. Now, on October 1st, it will go up to eight hundred marks. Friends of mine who had apartments for thirty marks now have to pay two hundred marks. Some of them can't afford it. I thought things in Dresden would get better, but they're worse now than when I came. People have no work and can't pay their rent, and everything is more expensive. People are saying they don't know if they can make it. They can't get food. We already have a very high suicide rate. A lot of old people have been killing themselves."

Even so, Gunnar said, he was happy to be back in Dresden, settling into the fall jazz season at Café 100, installing some fancy filigreed coffeepots he had bought in the East Village during his visit to New York, and relaxing from his trek through neo-revolutionary Russia. Before long, he said, he would visit Max in Hanover. For the moment, though, he was just taking it easy—pleased at all he had seen this summer, pleased that he was making life in Dresden a little more livable for his fellow-Ossies. "I'm probably buying an apartment in Kiev," Gunnar said before he hung up. "It's only five thousand marks, and it's a great apartment. I've already begun the proceedings, but they still have to decide what the rules are for foreigners. I only have to wait for everything to become legal and official. I'll probably go back to Russia before long to close the deal. Besides, I have to go back to see Lenin's tomb. I didn't get to look at it last week—the line was too long."



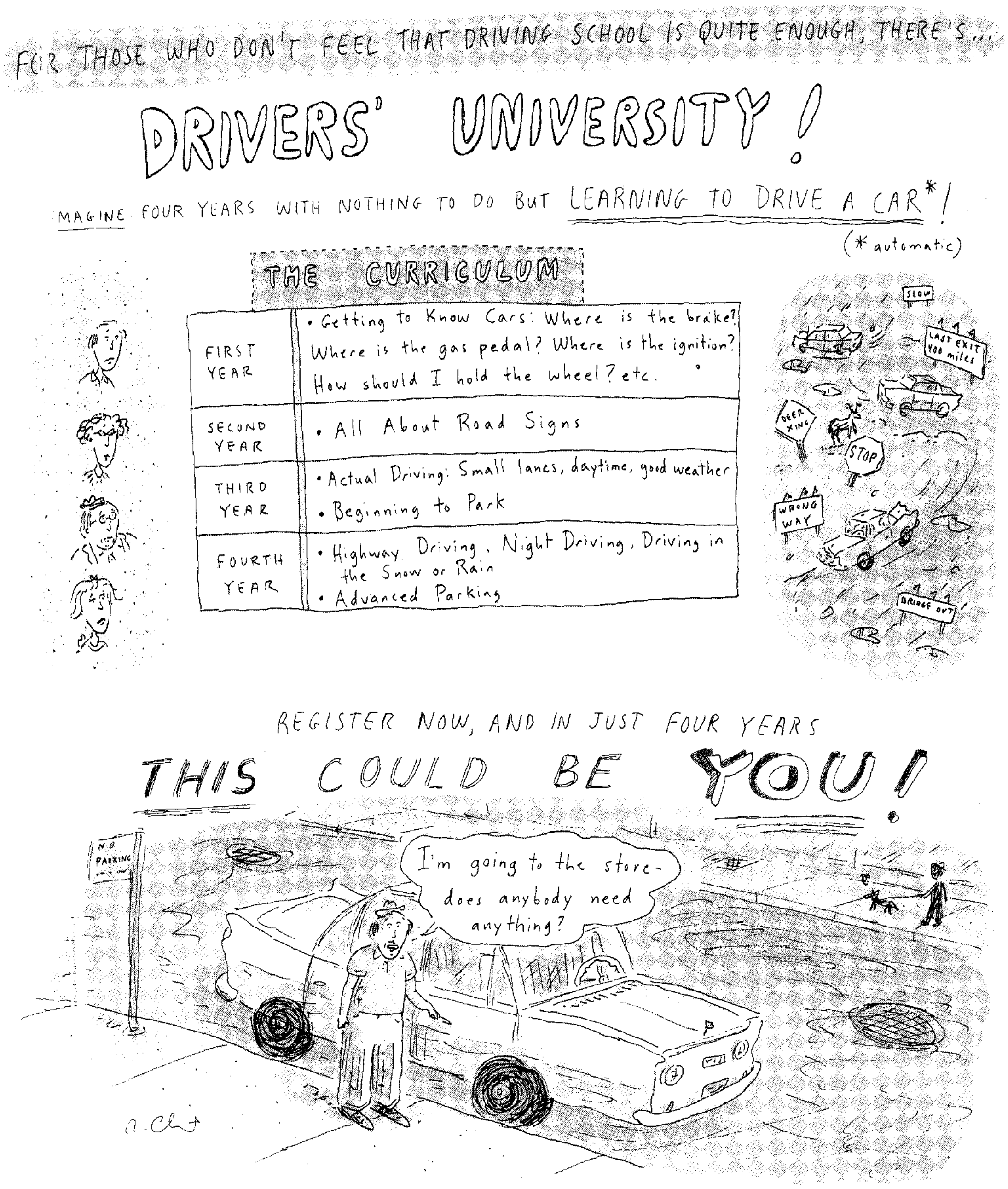
"Boys, boys. You're getting loud and no one gives a damn how big your salaries used to be."

Fertilizer

HOW many other representatives of the general-interest media showed up the other night at the Marriott Marquis for the cocktail reception that kicked off the sixteenth-annual World Fertilizer Conference? Well, maybe we were the only Fourth Estater in the room, and maybe that made us feel awkward, but maybe it also gave us a little self-knowledge and life wisdom that will come in extremely handy the next time we get an anonymous tip that a big fertilizer convention is coming to town. You just have to get in there and experience these things for yourself, and now that we've done it no one can ever say we haven't done it.

Eleven hundred men in fairly expensive suits showed up at the reception. Specifically, we're talking about eleven hundred totally self-assured major players—a lot of them with degrees in chemistry, and scratch golf handicaps, and firsthand knowledge of what it's like to have your company taken over and spun off as a warmup for a full-bore debt restructuring. They had come from Bahrain and Bulgaria and Tunisia and north of Chicago so that they could ride the glass elevators to the sixth floor, pay their four-hundred-and-seventy-five-dollar registration fees, and then amble confidently into the Broadway Ballroom, where there were crab cakes and stuffed mushrooms and fruit and several cheeses and plenty to drink, plus a thousand and ninety-nine other guys not to be trifled with. It was a room full of Oscars and Robertos and Mustafas and Eds who needed no reminding that for the next forty-eight hours all of life's petty concerns were dwarfed by two goals: (1) buy some fertilizer ingredients, or (2) sell some fertilizer ingredients. One item definitely missing from every single big hitter's agenda was cutting some slack for a reporter with wire-rimmed eyeglasses and a few polite but ignorant questions about whether rotted cow manure is as potentially explosive as ammonium nitrate.

Alfredo Grüber Huncal, the president of the Venezuelan petrochemical firm Palmaven S.A., was almost cer-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I'm going to the store—does anybody need anything?

tainly in the crowd. We imagine him relaxing near one of the buffet tables with respected colleagues, nursing a white wine and nodding gallantly and enjoying a bit of lighthearted banter about phosphate-rock reserves while anticipating the moment the next day when he would stand before the assembled conventioneers and deliver his preprinted thoughts about "Fertilizer Opportunities in Latin America." The Broadway Ballroom had very dim lighting, however, and we had a hard time reading nametags, so we're not sure we ever did lay eyes on Alfredo Grüber Huncal—he might very well have been upstairs in a six-hundred-dollar suite, sleeping off his jet lag. We assume that Emil Sherer Finley, the president of the International Commodities Export Corporation, made it to the reception. He, too, was scheduled to deliver a speech—one that he wrote himself, entitled "Development of the Fertilizer Market in Vietnam"—and he had to commute to the Marriott only from Westchester County. The truth is, however, that we didn't actually see him, either. But, without having shaken hands or exchanged words with Gary Myers, the president of The Fertilizer Institute, we do feel that we've got to know him just a little, because we read what he recently told *Fertilizer International: Journal of the World Fertilizer Industry:* "Change almost always brings challenge with it. Global fertilizer trade is no exception."

The news in fertilizer these days is basically excellent. Demand is up, because grain stockpiles are down, the weather has been crazy, and people are hungry everywhere. For the first time ever, diammonium phosphate is about to be traded as a commodity on the Chicago Board of Trade. On the regulatory front, it almost goes without saying that one corner of the world that could stand to come up with quite a few more environmental regulations is Russia—*Russia*, the largest exporter of urea and ammonia in the whole damn world—and the only reason we bring it up is that it would be a pity if everybody started getting soft on Russia just because it's been going through a rough patch. We tried to probe the whole Russia thing and a few other issues with Jim Nagel, of Ben-Trei, Ltd., a major nutrient broker out of Tulsa, but, while he didn't exactly give us the cold shoulder, we couldn't help noticing that his head kept swivelling and there was no way he was going to make any serious eye contact with us.

Kenley Fongsam wandered by, so we spoke with him. He has worked as a waiter at the Marriott Marquis since it opened, six years ago, and he is extremely knowledgeable about how to make a living in a crowded ballroom. "This is not as fancy as what we are used to having here," Mr. Fongsam said. "At most of our functions, the decoration is more exciting. Tonight, I think they brought their own decorations. The buffet, this is ours. Whatever we do here is nice. Tonight, this is a crowd that we can handle. We can handle two thousand people. To me, this is not a crowd. This has no problems. If you need more information, I am willing."

NEEDS

FIRST, what I need you to do is give me permission to drive you completely insane by using the word "need" in places where another word like "want" or "order" would be more "honest." We're going to be doing this (with your permission, of course—but we need you to give your permission) in phrases such as *I* (or *we*—the editorial "we") *need you to do this*, and *we need you to do that*. Also, as part of this process, I need you to totally accept and validate the phrase *we need for you . . .* to do this or that, even if that phrase makes you want to stand up and hit me. I need for you to do it. That's it. That's all there is to it. If it were just a matter of what I *wanted*—hey, it would be different. In this case, my needs are involved, and I just can't back down. So bear with me, because I also need for you to initial where I also reserve the right to use the repulsive phrase *what you need to do is*.

I want you to get to know me, O.K.? I (we) am (are) not comfortable thinking of myself (ourself) as a person who ruthlessly and rudely demands things of persons like yourself. When I (we) shove a rental-car agreement in front of you, I (we) want (need for) you to have the feeling that life is a matter of:

1. Fine Options

and

2. Splendid Choices.

At the same time, I (we) need for you to do very specific things—things so specific you would never dream them up in one million years. So why not accept a little guidance?

YOU are now ready to check in with our Guidance Department. Ready? Now you need to read and understand why you have to sign, date, and initial the paragraph beginning, "other word choices—surrendering the right to require the use of."

Other Word Choices—Surrendering The Right To Require The Use Of.

We need for you to sign this paragraph. Right now. Just do it. That's the Nike ad. "Just do it." Remember the handsome young athlete running through the decayed city? Think about him, how he's running and running and not asking a single question. We need for you to think about that, how *he* isn't asking any questions—just running and running—and then we need you to sign.

X ______________________________

Signature

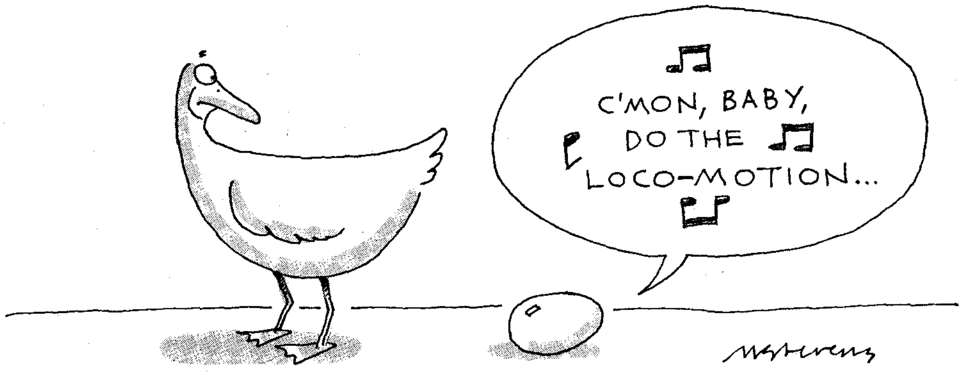
Thanks! O.K. We're out of novice level now, and you did great. But you didn't date it. What you need to do—oh, there he is, that runner! He's better-looking than ever! Look at those muscles! How does he get such a great body, living where he does, where the poor people live? Tempts you to ask questions, doesn't it? But *he's* not asking questions. *Doesn't have the time*, what with his TV work, etc. Guess *you* aren't going to bother with the old read-for-detail drag-o-rama, what with your high ambitions and goals—for the fulfillment of which there is barely time! And you already at a level where you breathe and hold down a job! Whew! Am I impressed! But before we can process your application we need for you to give us a thousand dollars. O.K. Thank you. You're great! But, uh, this thousand dollars is in *dollars*. We need to have you transfer that to *Swiss* dollars—which they call "*francs*" in one of the quaint *patois* they use over there in Switzerland. We need for you to do that, and while you are asking your financial institution to handle the foreign-exchange problem, we need for you to write a short essay on the Swiss—their historic neutrality, their cleanliness, and so on. THAT'S THE ESSAY QUESTION. THEN THERE ARE SOME *MULTIPLE* CHOICE. What you need to do is take the essay question home with you, bring it in tomorrow, and do the multiple choice now. Actually, there's only one multiple choice. By the way, are you sure you want to decline collision? Now here's your question.

The word "patois" indicates:

(a) Provincial speech—as found, for instance, in backward, rural areas

(b) Substandard housing

(c) A big patio


C'MON, BABY, DO THE LOCO-MOTION...

THE GOOSE THAT LAID THE GOLDEN OLDIE

O.K. Now you are at our highest level. What you did so far is fine, but you should know that in some states insurance coverage isn't what it should be, because lax regulators have let the whole thing go down the drain, so as a service to you we've made the optional coverage automatic. If you don't want the optional protection, we need for you to swear before a Federal Court judge that you are in your right mind. *Are you in your right mind?* Too bad, because then you've missed the point. We need for you to try harder to get the point so we can release the steaming hot dinner and the delicious frozen Margarita to your custody. We need for you to watch "48 Hours" for forty-eight hours. That usually does the trick in problem cases. The overtime is five dollars and twenty-two cents. We need for you to consider if it shouldn't have more of a multicultural aspect. Are you sure you want to decline the collision? Think it over. I'll be waiting on the big patio.

—GEORGE TROW

LILACS

BOBBY sits up on the side of the bed. He feels weak, spinny-headed and hollow. In a little while he tugs at the bedspread and wraps it around himself. Using the chest of drawers and the television for handholds, he stumbles to the air-conditioning unit below the window. He leans over the gray box, turning his head away from the cold blast, fumbling till he finds the concealed door to the control panel, and then blindly punches buttons till it turns off.

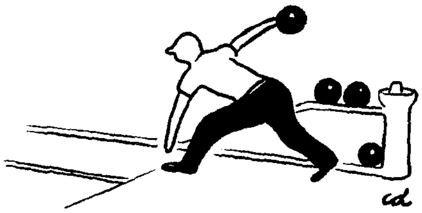
He draws the curtain back cautiously. He stares out at the motel parking lot for several minutes, focussing on any movement that might suggest he is being watched. Over the high wall behind the parking lot he sees the blue-green span of Tobin Bridge and, beyond that, the Boston skyline. The parking lot has filled up overnight. He sees Massachusetts plates, New Hampshire plates—an Indiana plate on a jeep reads "Hoosier Hospitality."

"First in the Waiting Room." That would be on his license plate. If he had a car. When he walked into the motel lobby the previous night, it had smelled of coriander. The manager, an Indian, had stared at him with alarm. "No vehicle?" he said. Behind the counter, a door stood open, revealing a woman's fat leg on a recliner; a silver toe ring looked welded onto her second toe. There were the murmurs of a TV and the shrill voices of children speaking in another language. Bobby peeled three hundred-dollar bills from his roll, and the man's manner softened considerably. "What it is happened to your face?" the man asked, coming close to Bobby. The woman in the recliner stuck her head around to look.

"Oh, I was born this way," Bobby had answered. He had smiled at the fat woman, who quickly retracted her head.

THE bathroom is cold. He brushes his teeth with the bedspread still wrapped around him. He tries not to look into the mirror. Why look? Better to remember himself as he used to be. As he is in the photograph in the briefcase—a photograph Primo took. It is from Myrtle Beach, the summer of 1973, when he was twenty-one years old. In the photograph his hair comes down to his shoulders. He is bare-chested, sitting sideways on Primo's '64 Harley, one hand on the tank and the other resting lightly on his thigh—his own thigh. He is smiling—a strong smile, a smile of certainty. Primo had said something to make him smile, something flattering, and his Fu Manchu mustache looks innocent, young. In the background is Primo's airplane, and beyond that, faintly, the sea, though in the photograph it blurs with the blue of the sky. Carolina blue.

In those days, Bobby worked as a manager in the Myrtle Mystery Mall, selling tokens for the peephole dioramas, supervising the soda and trinket concessions, keeping the lines flowing through the Dinosaur Cyclorama, shooing out the couples who lingered in the dark recesses of the Polynesian Fire-Walk of Love. He was ten years old the first summer his parents brought him to Myrtle Beach. They drove down from Spartanburg and rented a "cottage" (in reality, a double-wide trailer) for two weeks in late July, in what became an annual family ritual. Bobby, an only child, distracted, suffering again that summer with bad eczema, spent most of his time and all of his allowance in the Myrtle Mystery Mall. He thrilled to its dark, panelled interiors, the dim, red glow of the Chinese lanterns, the labyrinth of doors and corridors leading to exhibits, but most of all he thrilled to being part of the clique of boys who hung around in their flowery sports shirts and shades and seemed unofficially to preside over the whole phantasmagoria. They encouraged him to disobey the "Hands Off" sign on the Iron Maiden in the Gallery of Torture; they laughed when he tested the blade edge of the guillotine with his tongue; and later, sitting in a prop room, they let him sip from the silver hip flask that they were passing around—a mark of his acceptance. He much preferred their company to baking on the beach with his parents or sitting mute in the back seat while his father, talking nonstop, inched the Buick into the family cavalcade that went up and down the Strip in search of a different fast-food joint for the evening.



The year his father died, Bobby dropped out of the English Honors program at Appalachian State and moved to Myrtle Beach, landing a job in his old hangout. Every day, Bobby caught triptychs of himself in the Distortion Gallery; Bobbys were catapulted out of one mirror and reeled back into another: thin Bobbys, fat Bobbys. In the evenings, Bobby went to the Connection, and there he saw himself reflected in the eyes of guys from Johnson City, Fayetteville, Raleigh, wherever. They would cluster around him, buy him drinks, while he looked over the tops of their heads. One night he saw Primo come in, look around, and leave before Bobby could get near him—it was the only time Bobby had seen a better-looking man than himself in the place. Primo had returned in an hour, dressed in leather. This time Bobby walked over, scattering the people around them.

"If I had known," Bobby said, fingering the straps on Primo's shoulders, "I would have worn my skins."

"It's not too late," Primo said. They didn't make it out of the parking lot.

HE rinses off the toothbrush. He has no razor, and, in any case, his beard barely grows anymore. He runs a washcloth over his face and works the corners of his eyes. His eyelashes have grown long and translucent and have curled up at the ends—a side effect of AZT, according to Dr. Chatupadia. Of the six doctors in the clinic at Boston Metropolitan, four are from India, one is from Pakistan, and one is a Palestinian. Chatupadia, who has been Bobby's physician ever since Bobby moved to Boston nine years ago, took a photograph of Bobby's closed eyelids with the eyelashes dangling and sent it to *The New England Journal of Medicine*. Chatupadia was disappointed when they sent the photograph back, saying that what it showed was now a well-described side effect of AZT. He showed the letter to Bobby. "'Well-described,' they are calling it, Bobby!" he said, pronouncing it *Boobee*. "These people," Chatupadia said, and he wagged his head from side to side, letting the silence stand for all the injustice in his life and Bobby's life. Bobby agreed. *These people . . .*

These people had no place for Bobby. These people were waiting for him to die. Even Chatupadia seemed to regard his longevity, his hanging on despite plummeting weight and daily fevers, as an aberration. He was a bird without wings, suspended in midair, defying the ground below. His Social Security supplement, even with Medicaid, could not support him. It didn't cover the medications for the infections—the opportunists—that threatened to kill him before the AIDS virus did. Five days earlier, after waiting for three months, Bobby was turned down from the only multicenter interferon trial in Boston. Because his white-blood-cell count was too low, Chatupadia said.

"But my count is low *because* of the AIDS!"

"So sorry, Boobee. They won't allow it."

The other interferon trial in the United States was in Durham. He didn't have the money to go to Durham, but he called anyway, not telling them his white count. "Sorry, we are fully enrolled," a tired male voice had said. "And the study protocol only allows our own patients—our own AZT failures—to be enrolled."

"What if I came down there and waited on your doorstep?" Bobby asked.

They had a waiting list of three hundred. The doorstep was full.

"Just give me *some* of the drug! You don't understand—I have no more rope to hang on to."

But they couldn't. Protocol.

These people . . . But Bobby cannot give up. He cannot. He will not give them that satisfaction. He will go to the clinic today, as he has done every Wednesday these nine years. He will be first in the waiting room, as always. He will sit there and show everyone that he lacks neither determination nor, as of last night, money. And he will remind them of their impotence.

"We are an army of Boobees, an army with overgrown eyelashes," Bobby says to the shrouded figure in the mirror. His voice echoes in the bathroom, and he speaks even louder: "Across this great country, our army is converging on city hospitals. We will assemble in the waiting rooms. We will wait for the clinics to open. We will be treated—we Americans—by our Indian, our Pakistani, our Filipino, our Palestinian doctors: the drones. Upstairs, the queen bees will be working on the cure, appearing on television, writing for the journals."

Someone bangs on the wall next door. "Fuck you!" Bobby shouts, but he has lost enthusiasm for his speech.

He pulls his T-shirt on, trying not to snag it on his Hickman catheter. The catheter enters above his right nipple and then tunnels under the skin to pierce the large vein beneath his collarbone and extend through it till it reaches the vein just above his heart.

"Will any of your wonderful friends who found themselves through tap dancing be at this party?"

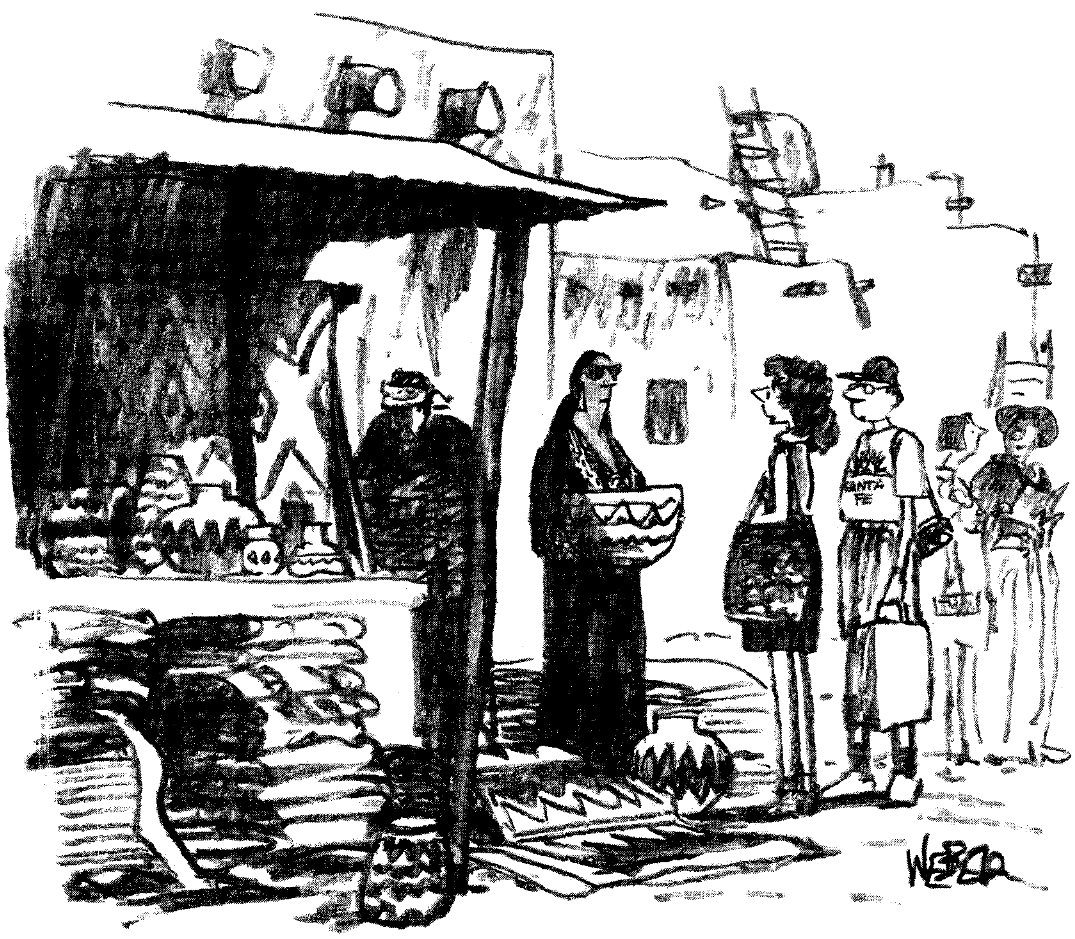
For two years the Hickman has been his lifeline. It has spared him countless needles; blood for testing has been drawn out of it, and all his intravenous medicine, at home and in the hospital, administered through it. He has not used the catheter in two days; the solution he injects to keep it open is in the refrigerator in the South End apartment he abandoned in such haste the previous day. The catheter has probably clotted off, he thinks.

He turns on the TV as he dresses. He flips past the local news stations, half expecting to see his mug flash on the screen, and stops at CNN. He presses the "Mute" button as Miss Cheekbones talks. He speaks for her: "An overgrowth of eyelashes is being described among persons infected with the AIDS virus who are on the anti-AIDS drug AZT." Here she flashes her dimples, and Bobby continues. "Concern is being expressed by advocates that this will result in people being identified in their workplace as infected with the AIDS virus. . . ." He remembers his father watching boxing on television with the volume turned off, providing ringside commentary in his loud voice: "Muñoz, once again pounding the body, coming straight ahead, hooking to the ribs— Styles make fights, wouldn't you say, Marv? You couldn't find two more different fighters. Concinni hasn't stopped moving, dodging, backpedalling, weaving—Oh! Concinni is tagged with a left! He's in trouble! He's down! Good night, sweet prince!"

He picks up the briefcase. It is burgundy and made of soft leather; it belonged to Michael. Michael moved into the apartment soon after Primo moved out. Michael did research on mice at the Genecor Research Center—mice with heart disease. He got sick and moved back to Iowa, leaving everything: his medicine, his furniture, his briefcase.

The bag has handles

that slide out. In the outer, zippered pocket is Bobby's birth certificate, his living will, his prescriptions, a yellow pad, and a pen. Inside the bag is the gun. And thick wads of hundred-dollar bills. He takes the gun out—Primo's gun. In his hand it looks animate and repulsive. He regrets having it; he regrets having needed it. He walks around the room, looking for a place to hide it. He has a vision of a child discovering the gun, examining it, playing with it. Reluctantly, he puts it back in the briefcase.



"We'd like to take this opportunity to apologize for the white man."

HE leaves the motel after a last look around. He takes a bus and gets off near M.I.T., near the hospital. A mist is rising off the river. He walks onto the bridge on Massachusetts Avenue. Halfway across, the muscles of his calves begin to hurt. These are not my muscles, he thinks as he reaches down to touch them. This is not my pain. He leans over the railing and looks down at the water. A purple reflection of his face flashes at him, and he pulls away from the railing.

He starts walking again, watching his feet: one boot with silver chain, the other plain; left, right, left, right. This is the only way to do it, he thinks—something Primo never understood. He is angry when he thinks of Primo, and Michael. Primo gave up almost at once. Primo had made the move to Boston with Bobby, in search of better AIDS care, but had bolted from the clinic after the first visit, terrified by the sight of a cachectic young man in the waiting room. Primo's only fight—before he was hospitalized—was to take wild risks in his plane. He tried Dead Man's Stalls and Cuban 8s in the Cessna until they took away his license. Later, Bobby heard from others—because they had separated by then; the path Bobby had chosen to deal with the disease made Primo and his fatalism impossible to be around—that Primo began to cruise, spreading it, poisoning as many others as he could, as if it would ease his own pain. This had enraged Bobby so much that he did not attend Primo's funeral. Primo's mother called him afterward, screamed at him, accused him of killing her son. Michael gave up in a different way: he left one morning, saying that the magic of being in Waterloo, Iowa, eating his mama's cooking, going to the high-school ballgames, doing whatever one did in Waterloo, Iowa, would somehow save him. It didn't.

Meanwhile, Bobby had tried it all: AZT, then DDI, now DDC. And ganciclovir. And the underground Compound Q. And intravenous protein feeds. And aerosol pentamidine. He had meditated—he still did. He had gone macrobiotic until he could no longer swallow. "Oh, I may die," he shouts at a car that passes by, "but not without a goddam fight!"

Near the Christian Science Building, Bobby jams one toe between the stones of the retaining wall and climbs up to reach some lilacs that hang from a bush. It is more effort than he thought it would be. He gets the flowers, but his shoulder hurts. He hears the woman's voice before he sees her. "Those are pretty flowers. But you should leave them on the tree."

She wears a track suit and tennis shoes; her gray hair peeks out from under a scarf. A handkerchief is tightly wadded in her hand, and she is breathless. Bobby holds the flowers out to her; it freezes whatever else she was going to say, and she breaks into a shy smile. He drops slowly to one knee. He imagines he catches the scent of her perspiration, sees the steam rising off her body. "The official flower of our state, Ma'am."

"You shouldn't have done that," she says, her hands reaching for one cluster, "but they are beautiful."

"Aren't you going to ask me what state?"

"Are you all right?"

He gets up and rubs his shoulder. It is on his tongue to say "the State of Immunodeficiency." Instead, he says, "No, I'm not all right."

Her smile melts into an expression of concern. She moves her feet, conscious that she has tarried too long already, but feels obliged to ask: "Can I do anything?"

"Are you a magician?" Bobby asks. "Never mind. No, you can't do anything. Thank you for stopping, though. Thank you."

She waves and walks away briskly, her elbows pumping high, her lockstep gait quickening; she turns when she nears the bridge, and smiles.

Bobby watches her till she is out of sight; he feels the anger return again. It comes in waves and crashes over him. Yesterday, rage at the mindless bills, the dunning letters, and—finally—the cutting off of his telephone and electricity had carried him downtown. He had seen his reflection as he tore into the Bank of Boylston—a whirling dervish in a black coat, with gun drawn. He almost shot at the reflection. Could a face really be that purple? He braced himself, expecting to be challenged at any moment. Instead, they pushed money bundles at him, even gave him a bag to stuff them in. When the bag was full, he shouted, "What now? What now?" but none of the prone figures would move. "What now?" he cried to the camera on the ceiling.

Too late he remembers that he could have given the woman some of the money.

HE rests outside the hospital by the dry fountain that is full of butts and matchsticks. Then he starts walking again, against the flow of traffic as the eleven-to-seven nurses head for the parking lot. He bypasses the main entrance and goes into the tunnel and walks down it to the Kass Memorial Building and then takes the elevator to the fifth floor. He walks past patients' rooms smelling of Lysol and bacon. In the nurses' lounge the coffee is fresh, and he pours himself a cup, then snaps open drawer after drawer until he finds some sugar. He empties six packets into his cup.

Two people in white come in. One male, one female. One black, one white.

"Who are you?" one asks.

"Who are you?" he replies.

"We work here."

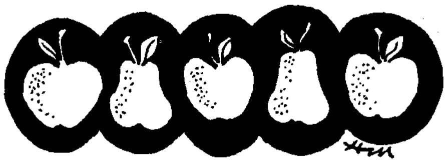
"*We work here,*" Bobby says. Such complacency, such arrogance, he thinks. "And I am a walking skeleton. I'm a voodoo doll. I own this hospital." They look confused. He explains: "I'm your three square meals a day."

His hands are full now, what with the lilacs and the coffee and the briefcase. He moves toward the nurses and they step quickly aside.

Bobby goes down the stairs to the second floor and then through a long hallway, past dark labs and locked offices, until he reaches the clinic waiting room. Before the first sip of coffee is past his throat, before he can even sit down, he feels his intestines start to writhe, and he hurries for the men's room.

Back in the waiting room, he takes one lilac stalk and leans over the counter, over the patient-register book, and wedges the stalk between the printer stand and the printer. Laurelei will keep it there all day. She says that whenever she thinks of lilacs or smells them she thinks of him.

He tries breathing and meditation. He wants to feel the prana ebb and flow. *Ommmmm.* His mind strays and he brings it back. *Ommmmm.* But there is only anger. *Ommmmm.* He thinks of his job as a short-order cook in Hoboken, ten years ago, while Primo was enrolled in a six-month course for his commercial license. It was fluid motion for Bobby—a moving line walked past him and they called the tune while he danced. He was the ballerina of Niko's in Hoboken, cracking eggs, flipping hotcakes, buttering toast, sliding the dishes down the counter. Oronfrio, the manager, said he didn't know why Bobby bothered with the men when he could have had any of the women. "Because I can have any of the men," Bobby would say, flipping a morsel of scrambled egg into the air and catching it on his tongue, all the while looking into Oronfrio's eyes. *Ommmmm.* He thinks of his mother in Spartanburg and how she must shudder when she thinks of him with Primo. *That's right, Mama. I was his blushing bride. He did to me more or less what Dad did to you.* She will be surprised when she gets the money he sent her. She will draw the shades and walk around the living



NEBRASKA, OCTOBER

Across the two-lane highway into Beatrice,
beetles split the toenail red of their backs and fly,

disturbed by the harvester
that spins its blades into a cloud of dirt and chaff.

There must be a name for them here.

I feel the chill of the evening,
of having guessed.

They fall on the terrace outside the motel room.
A blood grain sprinkles against the thick, fixed pane behind me.

They cling to the glass and join the flies
that enter through the door left open to give us space.

What a foolish place to need space,

leaning on the rail,
rubbing my hands together above the cars below,

where the cold sunset has still not left their paint.
Voices from inside make plans to leave.

I must stay one more day,
as if not convinced I'm alone.

—James Reidel

• •

room talking to herself, tormented by the knowledge of where the money came from and what she ought to do, and by her greed for the money and her wish to burrow in her house and deny his existence. He laughs aloud, and gives up the idea of meditation.

THREE guys come in; two of them are a couple he knows from the waiting room. They run a bar in the South End. Bobby remembers buying some dope from one of them a year ago. The third one—the new one—is not quite with them. He signs in and sits two seats away from Bobby while the couple sign in. Bobby smells aftershave on the new guy, but beneath it is a sour, unwashed smell. It is the smell of fear, Bobby thinks; it irritates him. Laurelei arrives behind the desk and turns pale when she sees Bobby. "Thanks," she stammers when the dope dealer comments on the flowers. "Bobby brings them in," she adds, and looks at Bobby fearfully. Bobby waves back and points at the rest of the flowers, which he has arranged in a soda can on the windowsill, but Laurelei runs into the inner office.

"Frankly, your mother and I think you did better work when you were two."

"The official AIDS flower," Bobby says to the new guy, pointing to the lilacs. The new guy looks at the lilacs and then at the purple growths on Bobby's face. "Get it?" Bobby asks, touching the biggest growth, over his right eyelid. "Lilacs out of the dead land. Get it?"

The new guy just blinks. The disease is not choosy, Bobby thinks; this kid is dumb as a coal bucket.

The new guy tries to ignore Bobby. He shakes out a cigarette with trembling fingers. There is a ring with a turquoise stone on his pinky, and his nails are long. They would be elegant in a different setting from the Metropolitan Hospital clinic. His brown hair is slicked back in a "wet look"—a style that Primo favored years before it became commonplace. Bobby moves over to sit next to him.

"You didn't really have a bath, did you?" Bobby asks. "Your hair looks like you had a bath, but you didn't. And you hurried with your breakfast—Doughnuts on the way? How did I know? The powdered sugar on your mustache. I'm Bobby, by the way." The new guy has the cigarette in one hand and a lighter in the other. "You can't smoke here. You can shake my hand, though. You can't get it by shaking my hand. Besides, you already got it."

The new guy puts the lighter away and Bobby shakes his hand. The hand feels crumbly, fragile, but it is its sweatiness that primes Bobby, forces him to take more interest in this boy.

"You must be Clovis," Bobby says. "I saw the register. 'Clovis: Forty-five.' Forty-five minutes is for new patients. Must be you. Let me guess. You tested positive—what, two years ago? And you were positive before that but didn't want the test. And now you wake up in the night and you feel cold and you put on socks and wrap your head up, and then in an hour you drench the sheets. And then you feel cold again. That's why you didn't shower, right? You were cold when it was time to have the shower. Am I right? You're shit scared, am I right?"

Clovis tries to get up. "Sit down," Bobby says to him. "You can't afford not to listen to me. You need to listen to me. I'm a survivor—nine years. If you don't want to live, just keep walking. That's better. Let's begin." Bobby puts both his hands round Clovis's forearm and twists the skin in opposite directions; Clovis yelps. "That's called a barber's twist, Clovis. Keep your eyes on the skin." A shower of fine red dots makes a bracelet on Clovis's forearm. "Oh, oh! You know what that means, don't you? Your platelets are low. You're farther along than you thought, Clovis. Good thing you came today." Clovis's face shrivels.

Clovis's acquaintances are getting out. Clovis tries to rise again. His eyes plead with the couple, who are standing at the door, but Bobby takes the gun out of the briefcase and sets it on the chair. "Clovis is with me," Bobby tells them. "And don't roll your eyes at me, honey. You guys don't look so hot yourselves. You got a way to make him live? I can make him live. What have you got?" The couple hurry out.

Bobby looks at Clovis; he wonders why he is bothering with this kid. Has Clovis become his hostage? In return for what? Bobby gets up and bolts the door. He paces around and then sits down. He has no doubt the police will be here soon. He takes one of Clovis's cigarettes and lights it and hands it to Clovis. "You can smoke now, Clovis. Everything has changed." He sits down and thinks awhile and then picks his words carefully.

"You don't know how special I am, Clovis. I am a nine-year survivor. I've beaten the odds; I am way over the median survival. Look it up, if you want. I'm the only nine-year guy in this clinic. And it wasn't luck either, Clovis. I fought for every fucking bit of it; I *scrapped* for it; I *took* all the responsibility."

Clovis is listening; the fear and gloom that were on his face are momentarily erased.

"Level with me, Clovis. What is the scariest thing about this whole business? That you can die from it? Death? Bang, bang? You probably will die *from it, right?*" Clovis's eyes get big. "And that fear is what kept you from being tested? And that fear is still there—right?" Clovis's eyes get even wider. Bobby takes out his yellow pad and pencil. He pats Clovis's hand. "The only way to beat this is to lose your fear, Clovis," he says kindly. "The fear doesn't do you any good. In fact the fear can kill you before the disease does. It's like most anything else in life: lose your fear and it can't touch you."

Bobby massages Clovis's hand, trying to imagine what it is like to be a Clovis. What does a Clovis really feel? He sees a "Loser, Loser, Loser" sign flash across Clovis's face. Clovis is giving up, retreating again. Clovis is ugly, Bobby thinks. The dimples are really pimples, he has dandruff on his eyelashes, his face is oily. Clovis tries to withdraw his hand. Bobby considers stopping but feels obliged to continue; let the kid have the message, for what it's worth.

"It's not illegal to hold hands—is it, Clovis? O.K., I'm going to let go of your hand. I want you to answer a series of questions for me. I'll write down your answers on paper, and then you put that paper in your pocket and carry it with you. Then—trust me—you will have conquered death. It worked for me. O.K.? First of all, where do you want to die?"

Clovis's chin is quivering. Bobby makes lines and draws columns on the paper. He is aware of the absolute silence in the building. "I'm asking you where you want to die? In the hospital? At home? On the street? You live with those guys, right? You all came in the same car, right? You work in the bar for them, right? A little dope, a little head— Hey, *I* know. So, you ready to die with them, in their apartment? In the South End? Or you want to die at your own house, in your mama's arms? Or do you want to die with me?" Clovis begins to open his mouth, but no answer seems forthcoming. "With Mama," Bobby whispers for him. He uses a Southern accent. Childlike and *very* Southern. "With Mama? Let me guess—Alabama? Tennessee? O.K., you want to die with Mama? You need to write that down, Clovis. Get that down on paper. Otherwise they'll dump you in Roxbury Cemetery. O.K., so you want to die at home. Now, what do you want them to do with your body?"

Clovis is weeping now, his face in his hands, and Bobby strokes the ducktail, his fingers coming away greasy. "It boils down to do you want to be cremated or buried?" Bobby busies himself writing on the yellow sheet. He is aware of the sirens approaching the parking lot outside, but he concentrates on the paper:

BODY	Home	x	Away	
DISPOSAL	Bury		Cremate	x
SERVICE	Yes	x	No	
MUSIC				
TOMBSTONE				

"I personally can't stand the thought of waking up one day to find I'm locked in a pine box with rats nibbling at my eye sockets. If I was you I would go for cremation. It's cheaper, easier for your family."

Clovis is sniffling and carrying on. Bobby lets the "X" remain where it is. Cremation for Clovis.

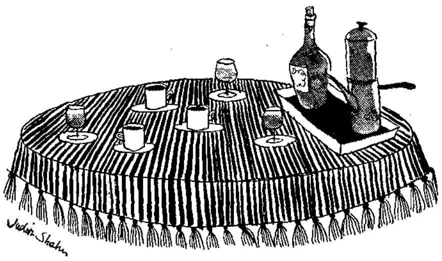
"Music? I assume you want a service—so, music. See, that's something you can control. Music: what do you want them to play? Come on, Clovis—music?

" 'Rocky Top,' Clovis? 'Rocky Top you'll always be, Home sweet home to me, Good old Rocky Top, Rocky Top, Tennessee.' " Singing the song makes Bobby laugh. He gets up and tries to clog but can't move his feet quickly enough. "Good choice, Clovis! 'Rocky Top' it shall be." He writes in "Rocky Top." He lets go of the pad to hold Clovis's hand again, because Clovis is trying to get away. Clovis sits down on the floor, his hand in Bobby's grasp.

"The eulogy, Clovis! Don't for[illegible] the eulogy. What do you want them to say? O.K., O.K., you can think about that. But the tombstone, the grave marker. That *has* to be your choice. 'Clovis. Our beloved son— ' "

Clovis breaks loose. He unbolts the door, pulls it open, and runs around the corner.

"Wait, Clovis! Put this paper in your pocket."

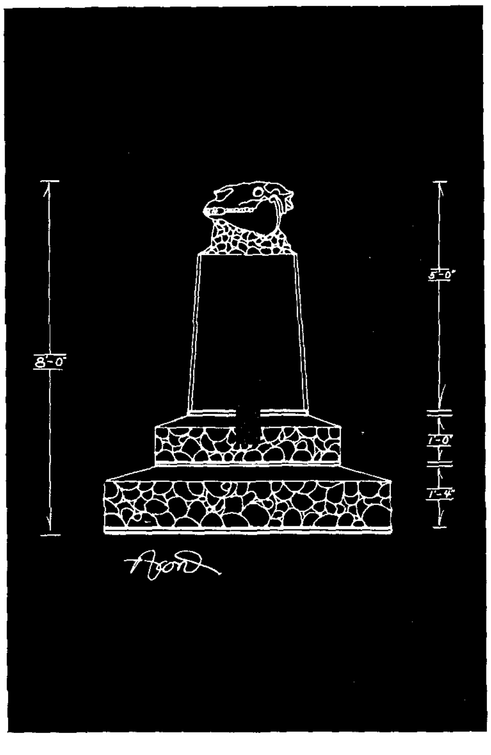


Bobby picks up the gun but then tosses it out the window. He sits on the floor and carefully folds the paper into an airplane. His body is rocking back and forth with concentration. When he is done, he stands up and looks out the window. He is astonished by the crowd below. He sees Chatupadia and waves. He slowly pushes the window wide open and stands on a chair. With a flick of the wrist he sails the plane out. It is a wonderful plane—the best he has ever made. It catches an updraft and rises in a tight spiral. Bobby is drawn to the window: the yellow plane is still climbing. Bobby steps out on the sill and cranes his neck to follow it. Finally, when it can climb no more, it banks into a lazy left turn. He is aware of voices yelling at him, but they are drowned out by the roar of the plane's engine. He imagines himself as the pilot. The plane finds another updraft. Bobby increases the power to full throttle and points the nose straight up. Gravity works against him, and he watches the airspeed indicator drop rapidly Just before the plane shudders to a stop, he applies full rudder. He has timed it exactly, and his plane makes a perfect Hammerhead turn, rotating on the tip of one wing. Now he points the nose at the crowd below. He sees his airspeed rise again. The wings shudder and the wind whips at his face. He puts his finger on the "Fire" button. "Coming at you!" he shouts.

—Abraham Verghese

PROFILES

MOVING TO RICHLAND—I



IN the waning moments of Civilization, June 24, 1989, tumbleweed rolled in the streets of Seattle, and the air hummed with the sound of decaying uranium. Cooling water bubbled chaotically in the tank of a nuclear reactor as the ghostly neon blue of the Cerenkov effect—the glow of radiation passing through liquid—played across the face of a large chunk of granite. A few feet away, an amplified Geiger counter chirped like a giant grasshopper. A woman's voice stuttered over and over, "Ato-ato-atomic." At 6 P.M., and again at 7:30, a man in a yellow radiation suit and a gas mask calmly announced his plan to contain the hazard. Over a television monitor a few observers watched workmen drop uranium fuel rods by remote control into a vat of acid; a moment later, the monitor flashed with the light of a thousand suns. Afterward, the survivors sipped sangria from plastic glasses.

The humming and stuttering were part of a synthesized soundtrack, composed and produced by Paul Kosmo, an electronic musician and environmental consultant. The Cerenkov glow and other visual effects were in part assembled from the film archives of the Atomic Industrial Forum and the Department of Energy by an independent filmmaker named Tom Putnam. Civilization ended, in other words, not with a bang but a performance piece. But then Civilization itself was only an umbrella name for a three-month series of exhibits by a variety of artists, presented by the 9-1-1 Contemporary Arts Center in a storefront near the docks of Seattle. The performance was part of the final show, called "Moving to Richland," featuring the work of James L. Acord, Jr., the man in the yellow radiation suit.

Acord had, in fact, recently moved to Richland, the administrative center and bedroom town for the Hanford nuclear reservation, in eastern Washington. Richland is not known as a center for the arts, but to Acord, who designs and builds nuclear sculpture, it seemed natural to set up shop in a place called Atomic City. It was there that he hoped to find a source for two materials he deems necessary for his art: uranium and plutonium.

Acord's work is fundamentally different from that of other sculptors involved in nuclear issues. For example, Henry Moore's mushroom-cloud death's-head at the site of the first atomic pile, in Chicago, is a commentary on nuclear power and destruction. Tony Price, a New Mexico assemblagist who gets parts from the Los Alamos scrap yard, makes sculpture that could be considered a mechanical by-product of the nuclear industry. Acord is apparently alone in his use of radioactive material as an integral part of his art.

Sculpture, Acord wrote in his notes for the exhibit, is "the art of shape—the purposeful and aesthetic arrangement of mass and void." And shape is "the *critical* property of uranium and plutonium," he pointed out. "It was the ordered arrangement of the mass and void of these two metals that was our twin ticket into the nuclear age. Obviously, no more appropriate materials exist for sculpture than those whose essence is altered so dramatically by shape alone. . . . I believe that my work will benefit from access to modern materials usage, and, equally, I believe that art has something to offer toward civilization's understanding and mastery of the nuclear age we have created."

Acord has proposed solutions to problems all along the nuclear fuel and weapons cycles. He has designed two-hundred-mile-long earthworks for uranium-mine tailings on the Colorado Plateau. He has also developed plans for a series of granite sculptures, each containing the plutonium from one nuclear warhead, to be strung across the Aleutian Islands and through Siberia, stretching eventually, perhaps, around the world. He would then replace the warheads themselves with "artheads"—missile-launched sculptures of granite and titanium. These would be useful as warning markers in times of a reactor accident or a border skirmish; in the meantime, they would satisfy budget-hungry bureaucrats in the Department of Defense. "They'd cost as much as the real thing," he says, "but they'd be perfectly harmless." Sketches of these works—nearly two hundred altogether—lined the walls at the show.

While waiting for his chance to work with weapons-grade plutonium, Acord learned to make do with a different radioactive source material: Mango Red Fiesta pottery. The prototype for Acord's plutonium repositories, a granite sculpture called "Monstrance for a Grey Horse," is designed to hold thirty-three pounds of concentrated Mango Red glaze, safely contained in a stainless-steel cannister hidden inside its base. The "Mark I Studio Reactor," a desk-top nuclear-power source, is fuelled by a cupboardful of mixed Fiesta stacked in a thirty-gallon fish tank. At the moment, the reactor is quite safe; by Acord's calculations it will not actually go critical for several million years. Nevertheless, the stream of gamma rays coming off the plates at the 9-1-1 exhibit was strong enough to set the Geiger counter chirping at a level measurably greater than that of natural background radiation.

Casual collectors of Fiesta, the Art Deco tableware beloved of Andy Warhol, may be unaware that their Mango Red pieces should be treated as hazardous waste. But the vivid color of these pieces, more orange than red, is indeed produced by a radioactive material—uranium oxide. Reports on the glaze occasionally appear in the newspapers, and Fiesta connoisseurs circulate stories of crazies who claim that beams emitted by the plates can penetrate walls and light up the ears of diners. No one takes these ideas seriously, of course—no one, that is, except the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services. In the spring of 1987, Acord took a sample of powdered Mango Red glaze to the State Office of Radiation Control, to request a gamma-ray spectrum analysis. Officials there, citing a series of state and federal regulations, responded by confiscating his sample and imposing a number of restrictions on his work. They forbade him to possess more than fifteen pounds of Fiesta ware at any one time, or more than a hundred and fifty pounds altogether in *a calendar year.* They further insisted that he wear a personal dosimeter and file a quarterly report on his exposure to radiation. Finally, they threatened that if he willfully chipped the glaze on a piece of Mango Red he might be subject to a licensing fee of $292,885 for mining and milling radioactive source material. Eventually, after a correspondence lasting eighteen months, the regional office of the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission overrode these decisions, and Acord was permitted to continue his work. Copies of the correspondence were included in the 9-1-1 exhibit.

For all its conceptual elements, the heart of the show was solid sculpture. The "Mark I Reactor" had been set up in a sanctuary marked off by yellow-and-black warning tape, with biohazard signs and a dosimeter hanging over it like icons. Inside the tank, the pottery was composed in a complex, cascading still-life. A mixture of black and fluorescent light cast an ethereal glow through the water and over the plates. The random bursts of bubbles were carefully controlled by channelling pumped air through various pitchers, bowls, and saltshakers; the irregular rhythm of the bubbles played counterpoint to the chirping of the Geiger counter. Hastily assembled on a limited budget, the reactor nevertheless showed signs of exacting craftsmanship. But the real proof of Acord's seriousness was "Monstrance for a Grey Horse" itself, a one-ton monolith depicting a horse's skull atop a five-foot trapezoidal column. By the time the piece was shown in the 9-1-1 exhibit, it had already consumed a dozen years of Acord's life—nearly half of his professional career—and even now it remains unfinished. When it is complete, it will have a cast-titanium helmet mounted over the skull—and, of course, its cannister of crushed Fiesta. Even as it appeared in the show, however, it was a remarkable work. Monumental in design and delicate in detail, it incorporated all the techniques and surface textures of traditional granite carving. A ponderous portrait of death, it somehow managed to soar.

MADAME ZAZI
READER
AND
ADVISER
MADAME TALIA
SECOND OPINIONS
STEVENSON

AFTER the performance, Acord stood outside the gallery, unwinding with a cigarette and a beer. He chatted with friends and fielded questions from members of the audience. A researcher for a private environmental data base discussed the possibility of including Acord in a national directory of repositories for nuclear waste. Everyone complained about the muggy weather, but Acord assured people that it was not the fault of *his* reactor. He had stripped off the radiation suit and gas mask, but he was still showing signs of the heat. His face was flushed, and drops of sweat meandered down his long North German nose. (His grandfather changed the family name from Eckherd during the First World War; the name is now pronounced like "acorn" with a "d.") When he put on his glasses—thick prescription safety goggles—they steamed up briefly, hiding his pale blue eyes. His graying red-brown hair, cropped close along the sides, stood up on top in a high crest. He was wearing splayed-out running shoes with black socks, khaki shorts held up by rainbow suspenders, and a T-shirt advertising "Civilization." A tattoo of a lapwing peeked out from beneath each sleeve. The outfit emphasized his short, lean legs, barrel chest, and expanding waist. Pinned to one suspender strap, just above his heart, was a button from the Granite Cutters' International Association—A.F.L.-C.I.O. Farther down the strap was a "five-chip," a thermoluminescent dosimeter badge, with five lithium-crystal chips to measure broad-spectrum radiation.

A woman wearing a yellow sundress approached him with a puzzled frown. "Excuse me," she said. "But aren't you glamorizing—or, no, *glorifying*—the whole nuclear process?"

Acord pulled his shoulders back and held his neck so straight that the flesh under his chin swelled out like a ruff. He had heard this question before. "Well," he answered slowly, "the thing is, is like it or not, we've created tons and tons—thousands of tons—of radioactive material. The waste from the Manhattan Project is still with us, out at Hanford, and, one way or another, it'll be with us for a long time. We're talking about containing radioactive materials with half-lives that exceed our written history by thousands of years—plutonium, for instance, with a half-life of about twenty-five thousand years. And now we've got to deal with it, all of us, for the very survivability of the planet."

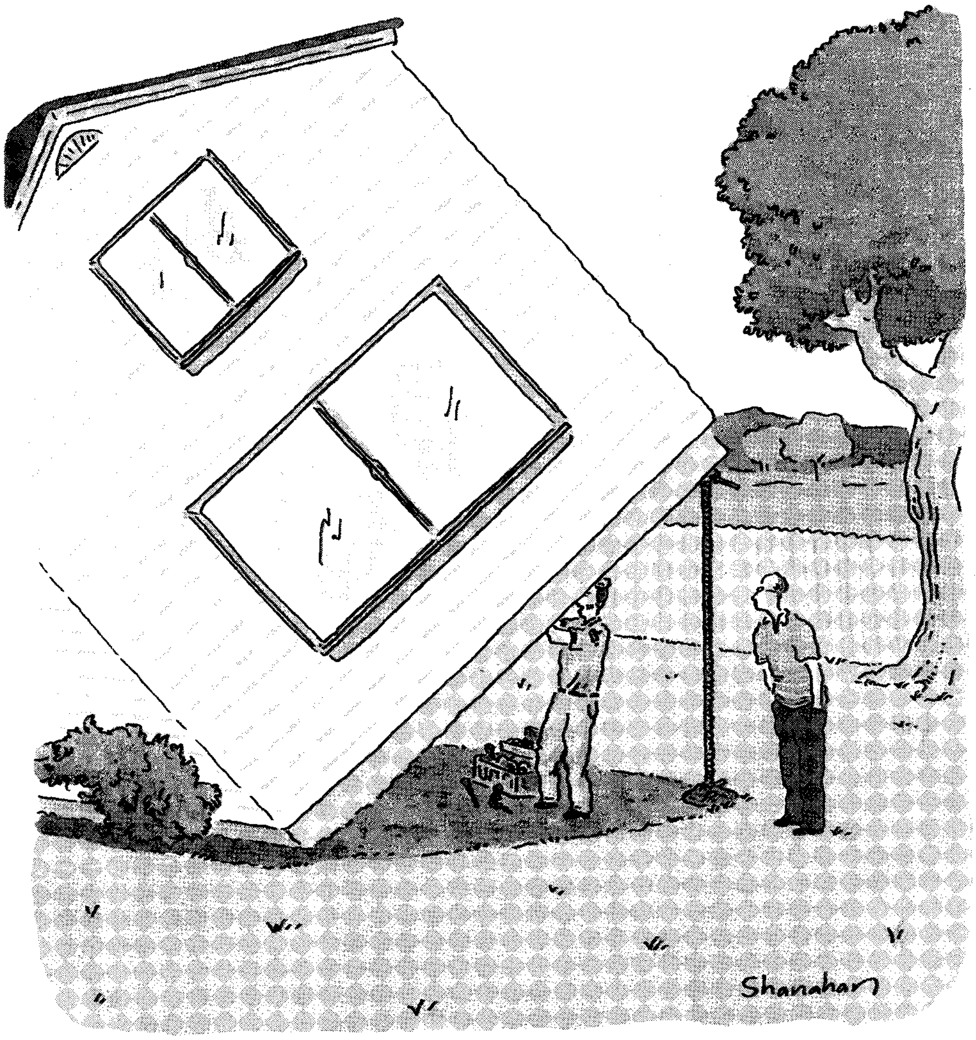
"So is this for real?" the woman interrupted. "Or is it just symbolic? Are you talking about warning markers?"

Acord squinted, cocked his head, and leaned toward the woman. He had the look of a large, amiable woodpecker. "Am I talking about the *mourning market*?" he asked.

The woman repeated her question.

"Oh, warning markers. Well, you know, that's a big part of it. I don't want to tout my engineering skills here, but the materials I'm using can, in fact, safely contain this material, in a way in which it can be preserved and safely shielded from the outside environment. But there's always the human factor. Anything that's been made by man can be destroyed by man. If someone *really* wanted to get into one of these things, they could; I can slow 'em down a lot, but I can't stop 'em. No one can. So we need to send a warning to generations yet unborn. The trouble is, we have no idea what the world will be like twenty-five thousand years from now, what people will be thinking, how they will be communicating."

Acord paused to light another cigarette. "If we look back in the other direction, though, we do have art that dates from the Ice Age, thirty thousand years ago. In fact, I've often speculated that my shadowy, forgotten colleagues from long ago created these works of art out of enduring materials specifically to span the time, to outlast the individual short life of a human being, or even of the tribe or the society that created them. Some of these sculptures and paintings still speak to us today with an eloquence that we can all respond to, I think. So art is an answer. I'm not against words and mathematics, you know, but I'm not counting on them. The language of art may be the best way we have to let people know that this is *bad* stuff, and they'd better keep away."



"Someone's been tinkering with your adjustable-rate mortgage."

THIRTY thousand years is a standard unit of measure in Acord's time scheme. One might, for example, begin his story back in the Lascaux caves, where his "shadowy forgotten colleagues" inscribed their ideas in pigment and rock. To do him justice, though, one might have to go back two billion years, to the Precambrian era, when granite welled up from the earth and oozed across what we now call Vermont. Or even to the Big Bang, if there was such a thing, when the radioactivity now glazing the Fiesta ware first put in its appearance. Acord invokes these events as though he had been there, and all of them invade his thoughts as he pursues his work.

He was actually born in the Holocene, on October 19, 1944, the only child of Gail Elizabeth Chapman and James Leroy Acord. Gail had trained to be an English teacher, but during the war she worked as a billing clerk in the Port of Seattle. Like many of her friends, she also contributed to the war effort by joining a dating pool, drawing lots for blind dates with sailors on shore leave. One weekend, she was matched with a James Acord, of the Merchant Marine, who was the pilot of the Alaska Standard, a tanker that ferried airplane fuel from Seattle to Alaska and Vladivostok. Soon Gail and three of her friends were tending the Captain's houseboat while he was off at sea; then, during one of James's visits to port, they got married. Little Jimmy was born sixteen months later.

After the war, Gail Acord resumed

MISTER HANUSEVICH

Hanusevich wants Nina. But why? Why?
He has tantrums, blubbers when drunk.
Nina laughs. Is he not funny?
Fat and all nerves, he has big ears
And flaps them, a real elephant.

A dark-blue cloud stands over San Francisco
When I drive along Grizzly Peak,
And far out, beyond the Golden Gate, the ocean gleamed.

Aï, my dead of long ago! Aï, Hanusevich, aï, Nina!
Nobody remembers you, nobody knows about you.

Hanusevich had his estate somewhere near Minsk.
The region was taken by the Bolsheviks, so he lives in Wilno.
When he was young, his mommy let him have flings.
He caroused with chanteuses, pretended to be a big shot,
Would send telegrams in Russian: "*Arriving with ladies*
Meet with music troikas champagne."
And a signature: *Count Bobrinskii.*

Chanteuses. I see now their satin underskirts
And black panties with lace. Breasts, too big, too small,

• •

her teaching career, and her husband reluctantly took a job on shore. It is difficult to see what the two had in common beyond a fervent belief in Catholicism, but their marriage lasted until Gail's death, in 1984—on the day of their forty-first anniversary. Gail wanted her son to go to college and become a doctor or a lawyer; she brought home all the latest pedagogical theories and techniques to try out on Jim. These experiments seem to have failed, but Acord believes that they did leave a mark on him—most notably in an almost pathological inability to spell what he hears or pronounce what he reads. (A mild hearing impairment, the result of chronic childhood earaches compounded by years of work in high-decibel industries, only adds to these difficulties.) Mr. Acord wanted his son to go to veterinary school or perhaps West Point. From an early age, he attempted to teach the child marksmanship and self-discipline, which Jim appreciated scarcely more than his mother's lessons in phonics. Certainly neither of his parents expected their child to be an artist.

In her later years, Gail Acord became an enthusiastic painter of domestic animals, but at the time her son was growing up his only source of inspiration was the *National Geographic*. Other than that, he can't explain the origin of his urge to create sculpture, because he has been carving for as long as he can remember. By the time he was eight or nine, he was saving up his allowance to buy fifty-pound blocks of salt. The blocks became imaginary marble that he carved into busts, using a hammer and chisels borrowed from his father. But the salt destroyed the tools and the Seattle rain dissolved the salt. All the boy had to show for his work was a beating for ruining the chisels. He had had his first brush with authority over his art, but he had also learned his first lesson in the durability of materials. He then turned his attention to brick, carving heads and figurines that he buried in his back yard. "I'd always imagine that someday someone would dig one up and wonder about it," he told me recently. "The sculptures that I'd seen in *Geographic* all seemed to come out of the ground. Right next to a shot of the sculpture there'd be pictures of guys with beards, you know, looking down into pits in Greece or Egypt, or somewhere. I was just putting them back where they belonged."

Acord's earliest exposure to nuclear energy came soon after, in 1955, when he was given a box labelled "The Story of Atomic Energy with Safe, Interesting Experiments." Billed as "a safe, thrilling Introduction to the Mysteries and Miracles of an Atomic World," this was nothing less than a nuclear chemistry set. It included bits of radium and uranium and a "scientific instrument" called a spinthariscope—a device that permitted the child to observe the effects of atomic decay, in the form of kaleidoscopic tracers emitted by radium. The spinthariscope became Jim's favorite toy, and he spent a great deal of time in a dark closet watching the fireworks. His father found this preferable to an earlier chemistry set that had produced many foul smells and at least one fire in the basement. He was less pleased when another experiment, designed to test the effects of uranium, contaminated the family Brownie and fogged a roll of film. The Porter Chemical Company, the manufacturer, declared these procedures "HARMLESS! EXCITING! PRACTICAL!" The kit is no longer sold.

The Acords never knew what to expect from their son. At eleven, Jim served faithfully, seven days a week, at 6 A.M. Mass; but whenever he got the chance he played hooky from school. As a senior altar boy, he had the keys to the church, and part of his job was to get there half an hour early to turn on the lights and open the vestry. "I'm sure there were many times I might have awakened at four, four-thirty in the morning, you know, and thought, what the hell, I'll go to church early," he said. "I usually left home before my parents got up, which was one of the fringe benefits. If you didn't see them, you didn't have to deal with it all. Besides, I would enjoy sitting in the darkened church with this faint smell of incense, the ornate tapestries, the gilding of this and that. I really found a lot of comfort in the church in those innocent early days. I was a devout little kid, that's for sure." By the time he finished Mass, his parents had left for work, so when he got back home he would often just stay there, reading or drawing all day.

As far as Jim's parents were concerned, the contradictions in his behavior were definitively resolved one morning when Mr. Acord got a call from Christ the King Parish. "Jim had a little problem at church," his father told me. "One of the sisters found him in the back room mixing something with the holy water." He couldn't quite recall what Jim had been mixing, but his son did: "Necco wafers, probably.

Worries, touching themselves in mirrors, tardy menses.
Later on they changed into *sestritsas* in the windows of hospital trains
(On their brows, bound with a veil, the sign of the red cross).

Nina is not for Hanusevich. Look how she walks.
She rolls from side to side like a sailor.
A whole year in the saddle, in a cavalry regiment.
What sort of marriageable young lady is she?

What did you find in her, Mister Hanusevich,
That you got so romantic? Always pretending,
Perhaps you adorned her with your fantasies.
And, it is true, your funny ears
Nearly transparent, with red veins,
Move, and in your eyes, nearly always, fright.

Once upon a time there was Hanusevich. And there was Nina.
Once only, from the beginning till the end of the world.
It is I who perform, late, this ceremonial wedding.
And around me striped, emerald-eyed beasts,
Ladies from journals of fashion, shamans of lost tribes,
Or, with a secret smile, a grave *sestritsa*,
Appear among white clouds, assist.

—CZESLAW MILOSZ

(*Translated, from the Polish, by the author and Robert Hass.*)

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And wine, of course. I had all these implements laid out in this vestibule kind of room. The cruet and the chalice and the paten. Various rosaries and knickknacks, religious artifacts. I used to know the names of all of them. In any event, when this nun came in to check on me—I suppose she did it once a year, you know—I was mixing water and wine and things, using some of these sacred instruments. And, of course, I'd already suited up—I had my cossack on." He meant cassock. "Well, no one's really supposed to touch these things except the priest, so when the nun saw me she almost had an apoplexy. I mean, the veins stood out on her face. If I remember correctly she took me by my ear, you know, and banged my head into the wall. She was clearly out of control. Sputtering. She sputtered a lot, and made a scene out of it. Clearly and unmistakably made a scene out of it."

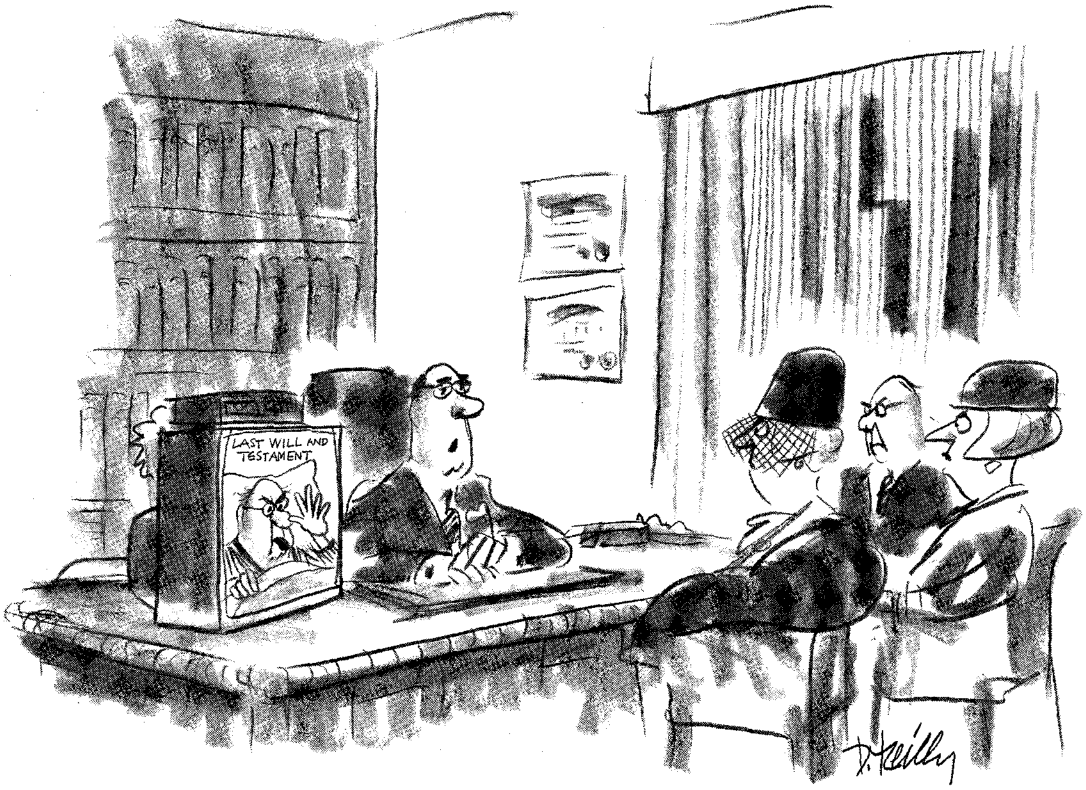
The Acords eventually concluded that Jim needed a stronger dose of morals and discipline, so they packed him off to Marymount Military Academy, a Catholic boarding school outside of Tacoma. Mr. Acord once told me that Jim was enthusiastic about the idea, and Jim admits that he probably was—until he got there, and found the place surrounded by a fence. The faculty at Marymount was a curious combination of nuns and retired Army drill instructors. Acord managed to confuse them as well. Thanks to his father's instruction, he had developed a remarkable aptitude for riflery, a very pure exercise in eye-hand coördination and intense concentration. Now, at age twelve, his marksmanship won him a place alongside sixteen-year-olds on the school's championship team. Within a year, he had added nine bars to his Sharpshooter's medal. His academic performance, on the other hand, was inconsistent, at best. In his second year, while nearly flunking English, he won an essay contest on the subject "Why I Want to Be a Priest." Eventually, however, his grades and assorted disciplinary problems caught up with him, and at the beginning of his third year his parents withdrew him from the school.

Back in Seattle, Acord finished out the year at Woodrow Wilson Junior High, and then enrolled in Ingraham High School. His parents would have preferred a parochial school, but Jim had had enough of clerical discipline. "There was trouble in school anyway, of course," he said recently. "I was supposed to be a bright kid, but no one could figure out why my performance was so erratic. So the guidance counsellor sent me to a school psychologist, and then my parents found a private psychiatrist who prescribed a lot of drugs—nothing you could get any pleasure out of, though. I think the idea was to keep me tranked out so that everything would sort of stabilize. I flushed them down the toilet whenever I could."

In his sophomore year, tranquillizers notwithstanding, Acord entered Seattle's Fifth Annual Science Fair with an experiment in radiation genetics which he had devised himself. He had persuaded a neighborhood veterinarian to teach him how to use an X-ray machine, in exchange for doing odd jobs around the clinic. In the experiment, Acord gave varying doses of X rays to eight pairs of hamsters and observed the effects on their offspring: by the third generation, the hamsters had begun to display signs of mutation. These results were impressive enough to win the Seattle Veterinary Medical Association Award (and a twenty-five-dollar Savings Bond) in the Senior Biological Division of the fair. A family photograph from that time shows a scrawny, rather nerdy kid standing in front of his cages of mildly mutant rodents. In a plaid shirt and bluejeans, he looks like just the sort of guy who ends up going to M.I.T., Cal Tech, or, at the very least, Washington State University in Pullman. Instead, Acord quit school at the end of that year.

"My mother had a nervous breakdown, I guess you'd say, and she was in the hospital for a few months. My father would go to see her every weekend, so I was left alone a lot, and suddenly there wasn't any structure anymore. After the years in military school and all the hassles at home, it was like a bell jar had been lifted off me. I could go down to First Avenue whenever I wanted, and look in the windows of tattoo parlors and sit in greasy restaurants with grizzled old men, drinking coffee and sketching for hours. It seemed a lot more sensible to me than going to school. I got the scent of the wild in my nose, and I never wanted to go back."

IN the fall of 1960, just before his sixteenth birthday, Acord ran away from home. "I thought I'd go to Italy, you know, and become a painter," he said. "Jack Kerouac's 'Drama Bums' in my back pocket, change of socks in my jacket, hitchhiking and walking to New York in October." An early bliz-



"After probate, family members will receive duplicate videos."

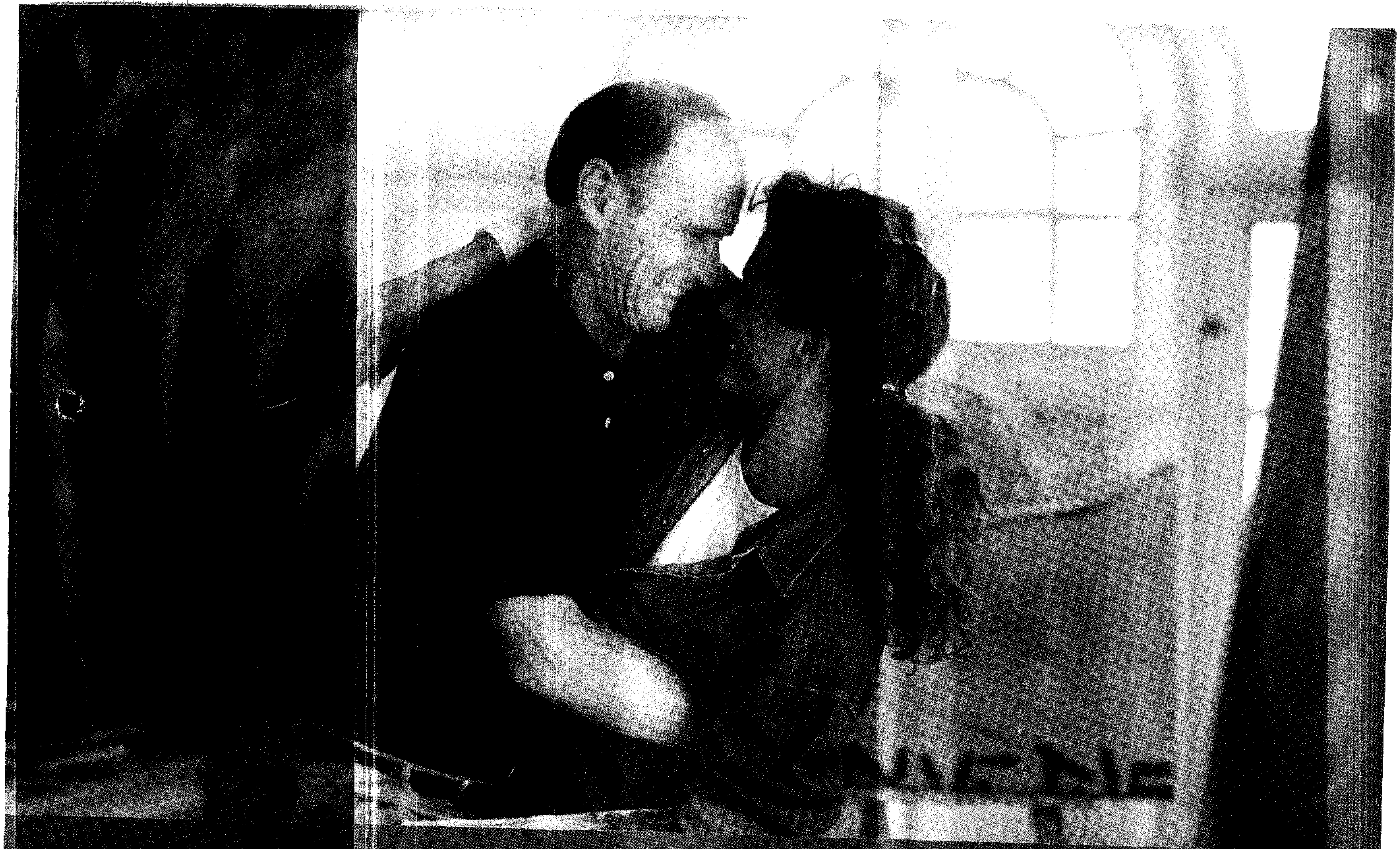
zard changed his plans. "It started snowing before I reached Casper, Wyoming, and by the time I got to Cherry County, Nebraska, I was the only thing moving on the highway. There I was, in my jeans and loafers, hip deep in snow." The road would probably have been deserted in any weather; northwestern Nebraska was cattle country, and Cherry County had more white-faced Herefords than people. Acord knew that his father had a "shirttail relative" somewhere in the area, a man named Chick Reece; it seemed like a good time to look him up. In a café in Valentine, the county seat, he first washed dishes for his breakfast, and then began to make inquiries about his relative. The manager told him to ask a group of ranchers sitting at a booth in the corner. Sure enough, one of them knew the man, and agreed to drop Jim at the driveway of the Dusky Bonnet, Chick Reece's ranch. Reece, it turned out, was looking for an extra hand; he offered Acord room and board until he could prove himself, and an additional thirty dollars a month after that. "That wasn't exactly what I had in mind," Acord told me, "but it sounded pretty good at the time."

A ten-dollar raise soon lured him to another ranch, the Tetherow Cattle Company, where he shared the bunkhouse with Doc McKeel and Lloyd Walking Eagle. Together, they did all the things that cowboys are supposed to do: rounded up cattle from summer pasture, five hundred head at a time; separated the herds; branded and earmarked calves; drove the herds back out to pasture in the spring. During calving season, Acord was promised an extra twenty-five dollars a week for riding out every two hours around the clock to make sure all of the births went smoothly. Mostly, though, it was pitching hay, as much as twenty tons a day in the dead of winter—followed, naturally, by the need to shovel out the barn, a truly herculean labor. "That was also the first time I ever welded," Acord said. "When something broke, you know, we fixed it. I didn't make the connection to sculpture at the time, but there was something about the color of the welding torch against the northern-Nebraska sky that I really liked."

After eleven months on the ranch, Acord gave up his dreams of Italy and returned to Seattle, but not to his family. He found an apartment and signed up for classes at what was then the Cornish School of Allied Arts, the former home of John Cage, Merce Cunningham, and Mark Tobey, where he enjoyed a brief but hectic career. "I was going to art school full time and working midnight to four or five in the morning loading trucks down at Irving Katz Produce. Seventeen years old, with a 750-cc. Norton Atlas and a girlfriend. Great year—boy, it was, I'll tell you. Seventh heaven!"

When a Seattle art critic asked him recently about his "teachers," Acord told me, he thought immediately of Sister Mary St. Felician, whom he remembers as "well over nine feet tall, weighing at least a thousand pounds, and not less than one hundred years old." At Christ the King Elementary School, she had presided with an iron hand over his third-grade homeroom. The faculty at Cornish were not teachers in that sense; they were his mentors, and some later became his friends. Indeed, within a few months of his enrollment at the Cornish School, his instructor in sculpture, Ray Jensen, invited him to help out with a commission he had won for the Seattle Opera House, which was to be dedicated during the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. In exchange for helping Jensen with the heavy work, Acord got practical exposure during the day to many tricks of the trade and the opportunity to try them out at night using Jensen's equipment. The piece they did together, a welded-bronze sculpture called "The Dance," still stands in the upper foyer of the Opera House, just outside the men's room.

Acord found apprenticeship and private study more satisfying than classwork. Cornish had accepted him on the condition that he go to night school, to work toward a high-school diploma, but he had no interest in completing the requirements. ("They were boring a couple of years before, and they hadn't gotten any more in-



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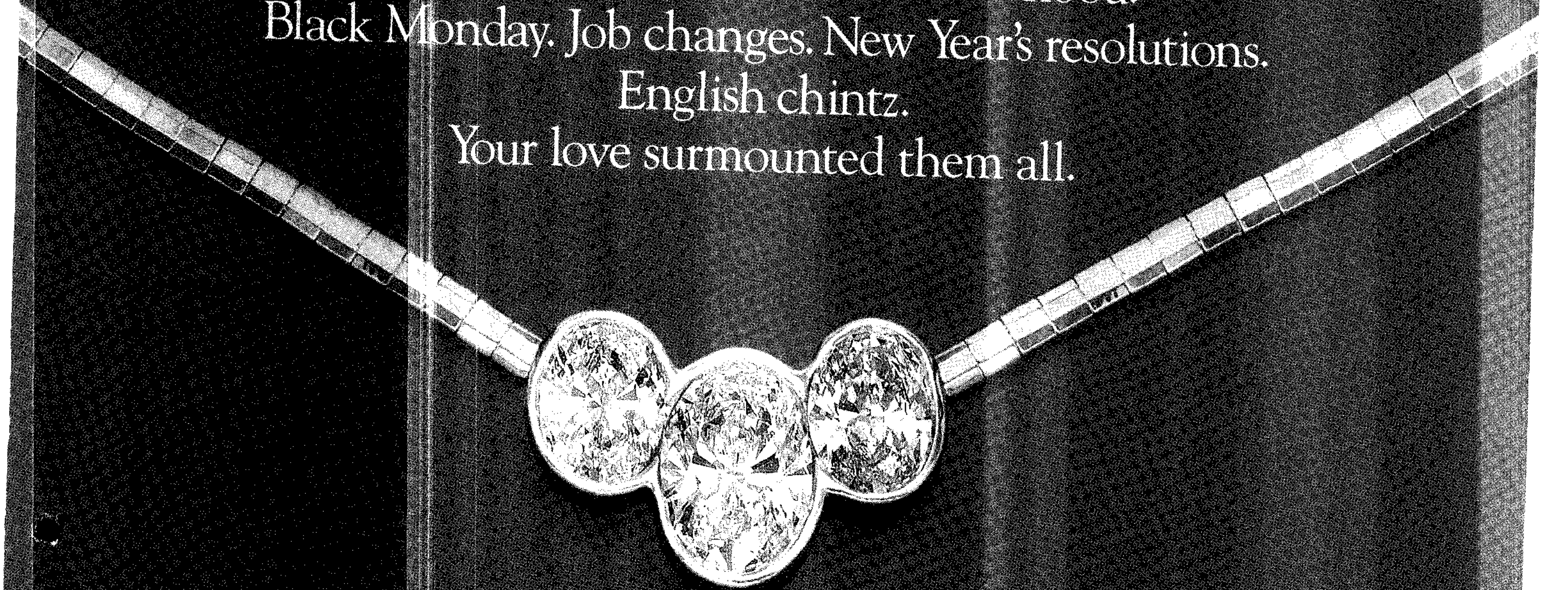

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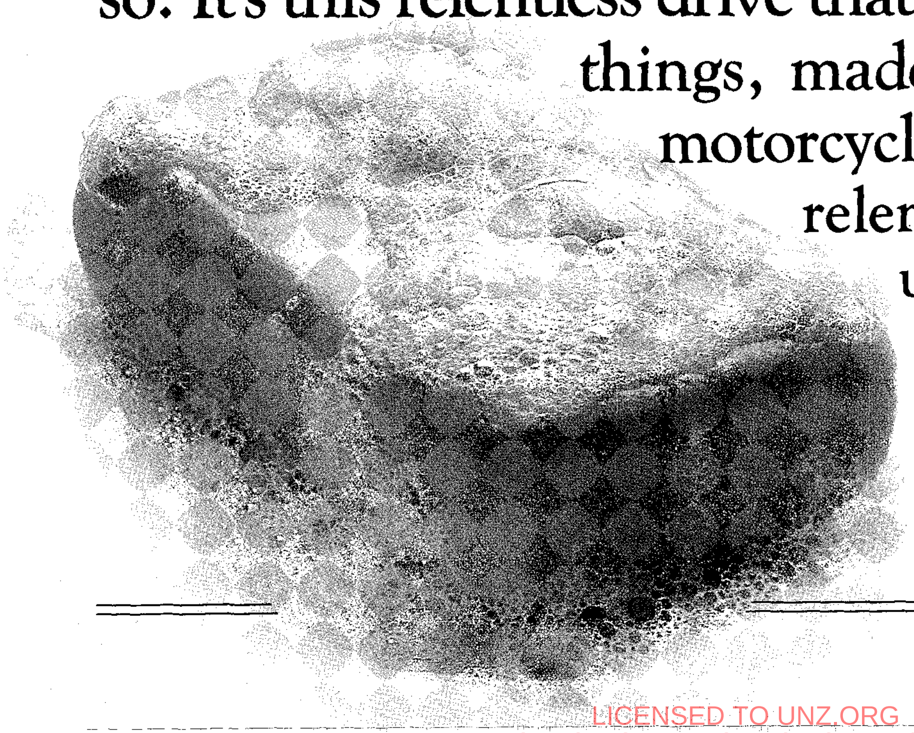

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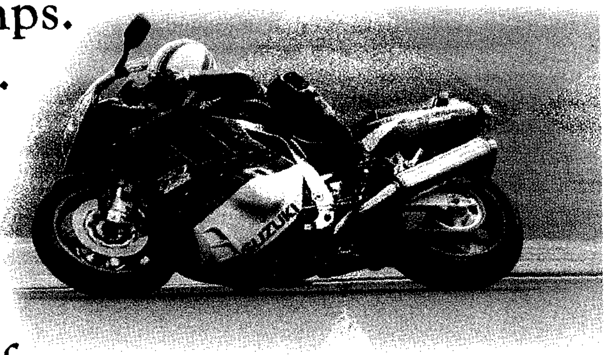

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teresting.") There were problems at Cornish as well. For one thing, he had no money to keep up with his tuition payments. Even worse, from his point of view, his fellow-students seemed uninspired and unmotivated, rich dilettantes who failed to respond to the lessons as he did—"like a dry sponge thrown in water." Somewhere along the line, he simply stopped going to class. His formal schooling had ended, and his education had begun.

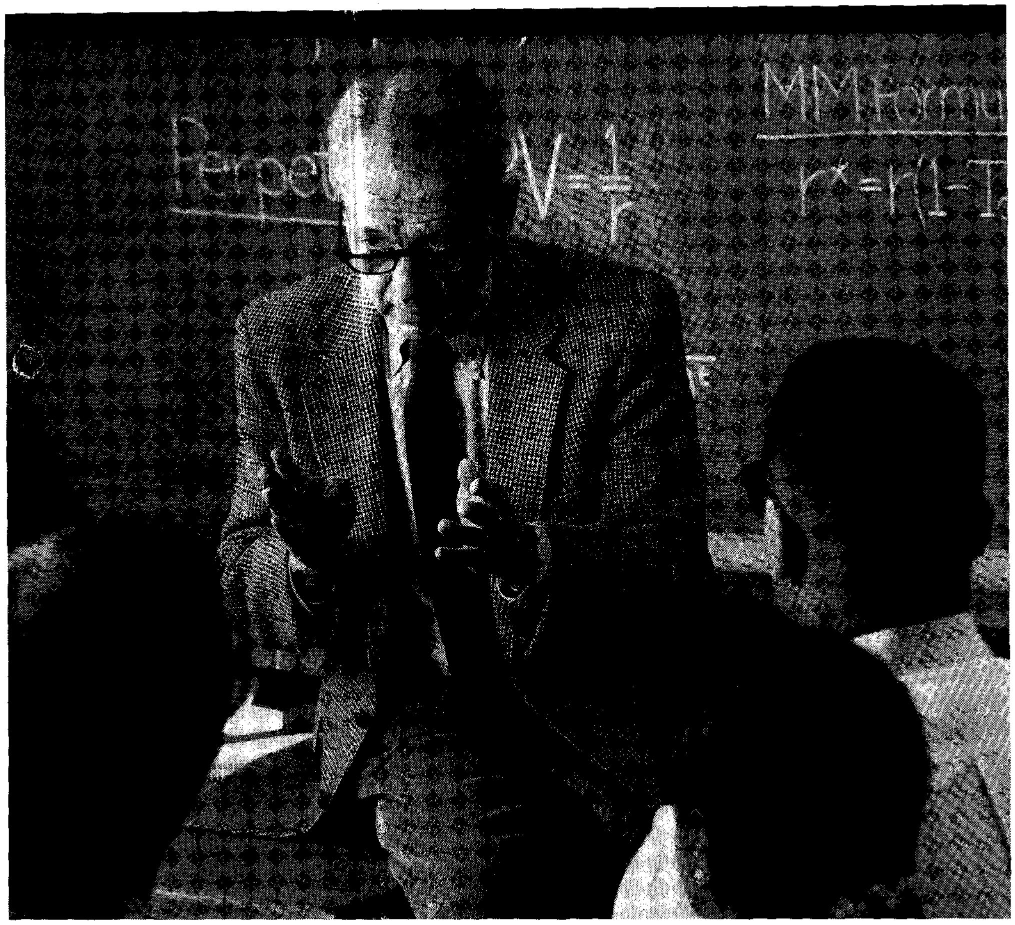
After six months with Ray Jensen, Acord went to work for Philip McCracken, another local sculptor, who lived on Guemes Island, north of Puget Sound. Acord struck a deal for studio space and "some cash," and moved into a cottage on McCracken's property with no electricity or running water. The older artist remembers Acord as "friendly and curious and always enthusiastic. He's such an intelligent guy, but . . . I don't know, he has this intense awareness of the dark side, the dark side of life, as though he'd somehow been imprinted with it. It seemed like he had some kind of a mission that he was looking for."

McCracken himself had been a student of Henry Moore, and he urged all his apprentices to follow the Master's example and study form by making drawings of bones and other natural objects. Acord took to the idea immediately, but he preferred whole corpses to bones alone. The appeal was partly emotional—as a child he had done a number of drawings of the family dog, Poodie, after she had been run over by a car—but it had a practical side as well. "They were models who never moved," he points out. "Cheap, too."

In addition to their natural forms, the partly decayed animals presented a rich variety of materials and textures: teeth, bones, muscle, hair. Acord's subjects included birds, small mammals, crustaceans, and some plant parts, such as seed casings, and his studies of them were extremely realistic—almost in the style of scientific illustrations—but they had a mysterious quality as well. His palette ran to deep browns and ominous grays—colors too dark to reproduce in a textbook, or even to see clearly on a wall. You had to get up close, which was all to the good, because there was no other way to catch the fine detail. What appeared from a distance to be a spiky abstraction might turn out to be a tangled nest of twigs cradling a dead baby bird. Even at close range, the subject often seemed obscure, like the split seedpod of a plant you had never seen, or the fossilized palate of an animal you had never heard of. For the next twenty years, Acord devoted at least an hour a day to his drawing, and he always kept his models close at hand. Since his drawing board was often the only table in the house, the little corpses also served as his centerpiece at meals, much to the dismay of dinner guests.

McCracken had wanted an assistant to help out with a piece in cast concrete, but he and Acord spent most of their time carving wood. McCracken taught Acord to collaborate with his material—to work the wood to express his ideas but at the same time to let the wood work through him to express its own nature. That was the goal, anyway. During the spring and summer of 1963, the two of them used to cruise the San Juan Islands, looking for the perfect juniper. When they found the tree they wanted, they'd cut it down, take it back to the studio, and prepare it for aging. By the time the wood was ready to carve, six or eight months later, Jim had moved on. In the meantime, however, he had borrowed some scrap from McCracken's studio and carved several pieces of his own—mostly bird and animal forms, and some human figures that Acord now describes as "halfway between Henry Moore and reality." He even sold a few at his first exhibit, in the Northwest Annual at the Seattle Art Museum. Encouraged by his success, he took out a business license as James L. Acord, Artist and Craftsman, and declared himself a professional sculptor. He was eighteen years old.

APPRENTICESHIP with other sculptors had introduced Acord to a variety of skills, but it had also shown him the technical limitations of most professional artists. All the sculptors he knew about were faced with a choice: they could limit their vision to the work they were actually capable of producing or they could design a piece and subcontract the manufacture to specialized craftsmen. Both approaches represented compromises that Acord was unwilling to make. Rather than lower his sights or relinquish control of his work, he elected to get his training from men who knew how to do the



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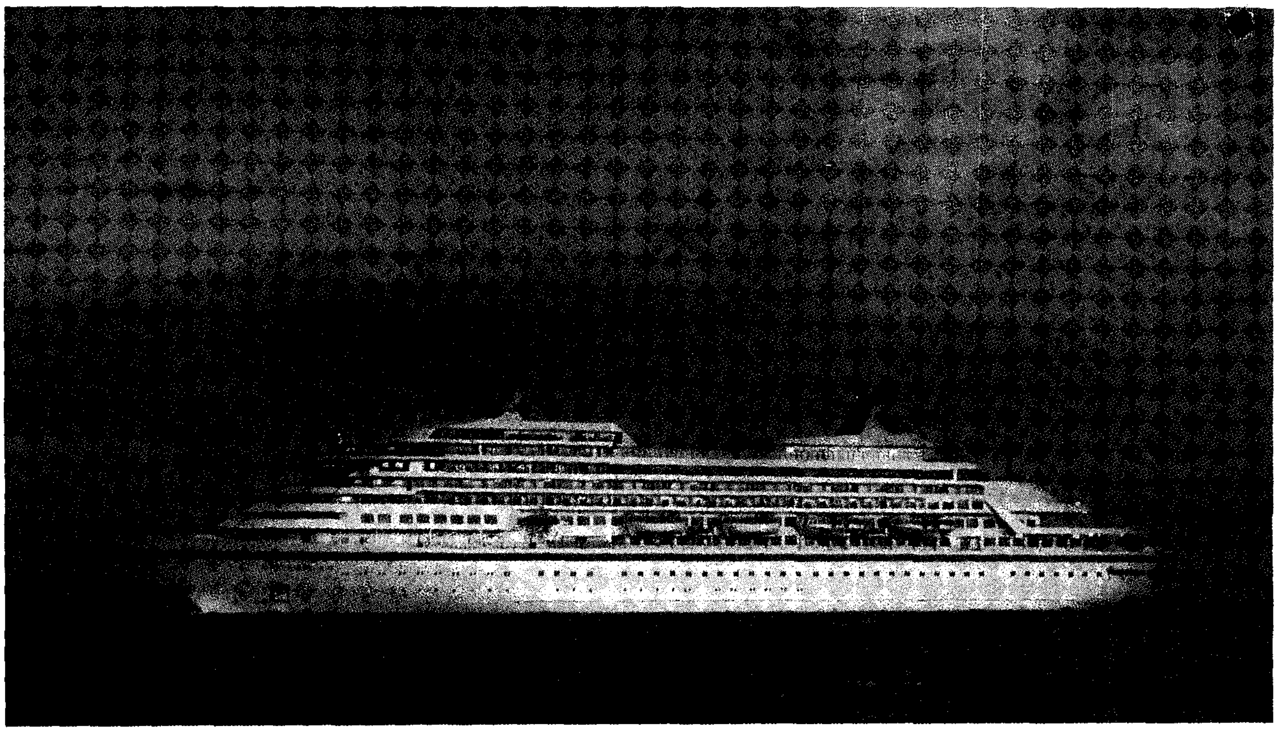

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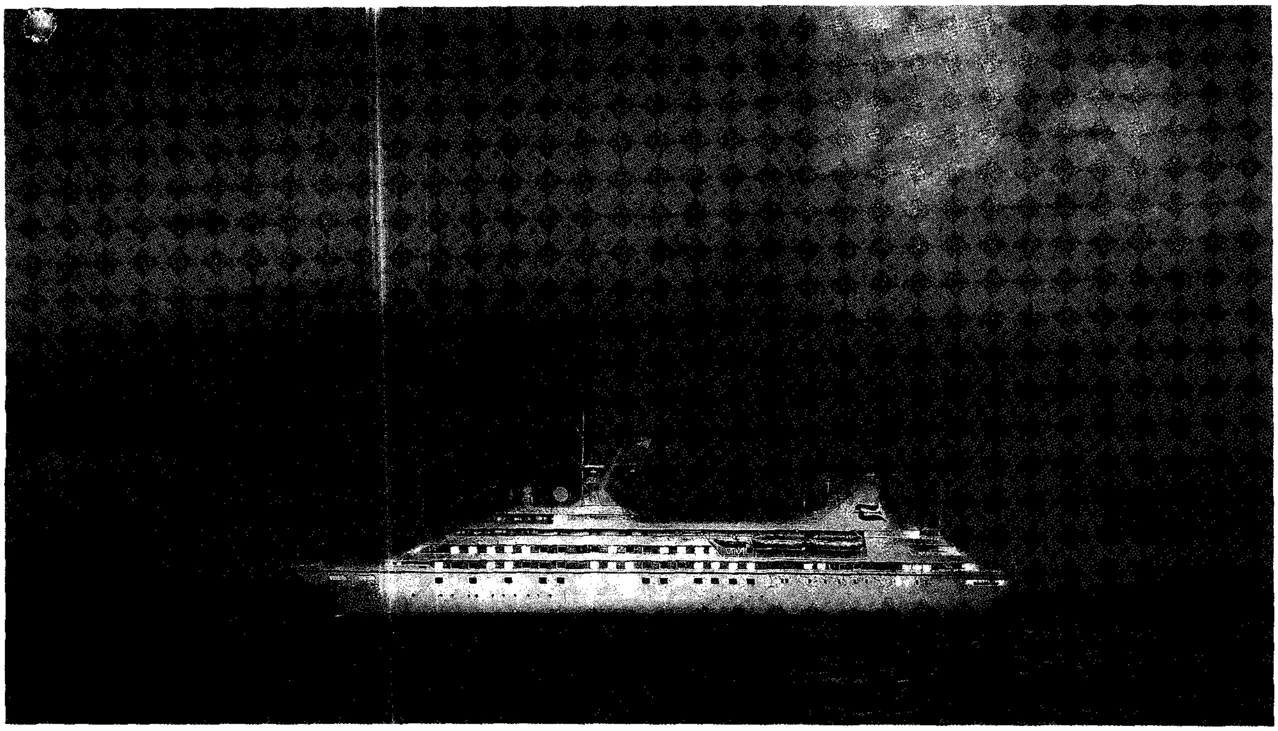

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job—skilled workers in wood, metal, and stone.

Acord's unexpurgated résumé, a stack of file cards half an inch thick, belies the motto he has scrawled across the top: "*Ars longa, vita brevis.*" Altogether, he lists forty-six jobs in the past thirty years, ranging from logger and carpenter, through pottery teacher in a mental institution and gardener in a convent, to commercial fisherman in Alaska and consultant to the Junior League of Seattle. His most illuminating jobs, however, have been in the metal and stone trades. Over the years, Acord has fitted ships, welded natural-gas pipe, plated high-voltage conductors for hydroelectric generators, tested the crystalline structure of cast submarine parts, and carved angels and baby Jesuses for the monument industry. He has belonged to nearly a dozen different craft unions, and he once served briefly as the president of the Barre, Vermont, branch of the Granite Cutters' International Association of America. He has stayed in each job just long enough to master the skills involved and, with luck, to save enough money (or qualify for unemployment) to support a few free months of full-time sculpture. Since his days as an altar boy, he has always preferred the graveyard shift: with less supervision, he has more opportunity to collect interesting things around the workplace, like scrap and rejects, and he also has more time to experiment and to work on his own projects "out of the lunch pail."

For many years, Acord changed his residence and his romantic involvement about as frequently as he changed jobs. Indeed, the three changes were often closely related. A girlfriend (or once, briefly, a wife) could provide room and board, which reduced the need for gainful employment. But when he had enough cash to buy supplies he sometimes preferred to be "celebrant," as he puts it, and pour all his energy into his art. Other than his daily exercise of drawing, the only constant in his life during those years was Gefion, an enormous Scottish deerhound, named for the Norse goddess of the hearth and of unmarried women.

Scandinavian mythology is just one of Acord's intellectual passions. To complement his practical experience, he has taught himself chemistry, geology, metallurgy, and radiation physics. To understand the purpose of it all, he has studied anthropology, art history, history, and philosophy. He reads books like Frazer's "Golden Bough" and Russell's "History of Western Philosophy" over breakfast, and he has been a subscriber to the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* off and on since 1964. The two books that have influenced him most, however, are "Pirotechnia," a sixteenth-century manual of metallurgy by Vannoccio Biringuccio (whom Acord insists on calling "Berlinghettia"), and the "Selected Writings" of Paracelsus—born Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim, as Acord loves to point out.

PICTURESQUE

That farm just north of town
does little but subsist.
Tumbledown sheds, machines
peppered with rust: it means
another struggle to exist
is tiredly winding down.

After their stand of corn
is picked to the last ear,
they let the cornstalks stay
to bleach as pale as hay.
Signalling winter near,
beggared and blond, forlorn,

these come into their own
beneath a birdless sky,
and give the meagre field
for once a second yield—
ingathered when the eye
sees beauty in the bone.

Opportunistic eye.
Eye of the passerby.

—Robert B. Shaw

Biringuccio and Paracelsus made wonderful role models for Acord. Both men spent decades wandering from job to job, all over Europe. Biringuccio wrote in Italian rather than Latin—evidence of his limited classical education and his desire to reach out to craftsmen. Agricola's "De Re Metallica" was better known among scholars, but "Pirotechnia" remained the standard handbook for practical metalwork until the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. For a number of years, it was Acord's standard as well; his third copy of the 1942 translation long ago reached what he calls "the rubber-band stage." Paracelsus, too, was, like Acord, a frequent dropout who based his ideas on experience in the workplace, not just on experiments in the laboratory. He nevertheless made significant contributions to chemistry and pharmacology as well as to the subject for which he is best known—alchemy.

Alchemy, in fact, became Acord's most enduring philosophical interest. "All my knowledge of nuclear energy is just a hat to put on my alchemy rack," he says. Acord's fascination with alchemy was in keeping with the spirit of the late sixties, when all his friends were boning up on tarot and astrology and the secrets of the Great Pyramids. What appealed to Acord was the alchemists' sense of adventure as they pursued high-risk explorations in chemistry, physics, metaphysics, and mysticism. "In fact, some of the early fathers of chemistry were really alchemists, you know," he said once. "They just happened to stumble across things like nitrogen. 'Wow, check this out! . . . Not what I'm lookin' for, though. Pass me that bottle of mercury and gold over there.' But, I mean, they were performing almost all the basic chemical processes that remained in use for the next two hundred years and allowed later chemists to identify and isolate each of the elements—including uranium, I might add." Acord recognized that the idea of transmutation, central to alchemy, was equally applicable to radioactivity and also to sculpture, both of which involve the mysterious transformation of elemental materials. In addition, alchemy provided a moral underpinning for all his work. "The base man who desired only for wealth would always fail," he said. "The higher adepts, the true alchemists, knew that what they were really transforming was themselves. The real lead was in their own hearts, and only through purity of motivation could they transform that lead into gold."

As early as 1964, even before he began to delve into alchemy, Acord had tried to transform his sculpture through magic. His work at the time was mostly hollow—molded plastic or welded steel—and just before completing each piece he would seal inside it a cache of secret items. He didn't realize then that such offerings were part of a long tradition among his colleagues in the trades—as old as the wildflower bouquets in Neolithic chalk mines and the handfuls of millet gruel left under the stones of the pyramids, and as recent as the three pennies tossed into the foundations of modern construction sites before the concrete is poured. He says, "The packet generally included some of the waste products from the manufacturing of the sculpture, floor sweepings, if you will, like the gloves that I had worn while making that sculpture, or wood shavings from an earlier carving, or crumbs of welding spatter—the tiny droplets of metal slag that solidify in the air like shot. There were also, you know, sentimental things, like dried flower petals from the romance of the time. I felt there was some cumulative power there."

The packets apparently were not powerful enough to produce the intended effect. Indeed, within a few years some of Acord's patrons began to complain that his early pieces were falling apart. He, too, was unhappy with his work; he had not yet found in metal the harmony he had sought in wood. His discontent is reflected in a change in his business license, in 1968, from James L. Acord, Artist and Craftsman, to Savage Abusement Sculpture Works.

Before long, Dean Andersen, a sculptor friend of Phil McCracken's, offered a solution to Acord's dilemma. Andersen was as meticulous as McCracken in his use of materials, but, thanks to Welsh parsimony, an interest in Zen, and a fascination with antique technology, he was less concerned with the sculpture itself than with the process of making it. He is still a highly respected artist in the Northwest, but his greatest creations may be his garden and his tool set. "Dean is the kind of guy," Acord says, "who would spend eighty hours of highly skilled craftsmanship making something that's available for ninety-eight cents." In the early nineteen-seventies, Andersen set up his own forge and bellows and started making jewelry; he persuaded Acord that this was a good way to carry out small-scale experiments with metal and stone and perhaps make a little money at the same time.

The jewelry sold well enough, but the venture was never profitable, because Acord, like Andersen, became

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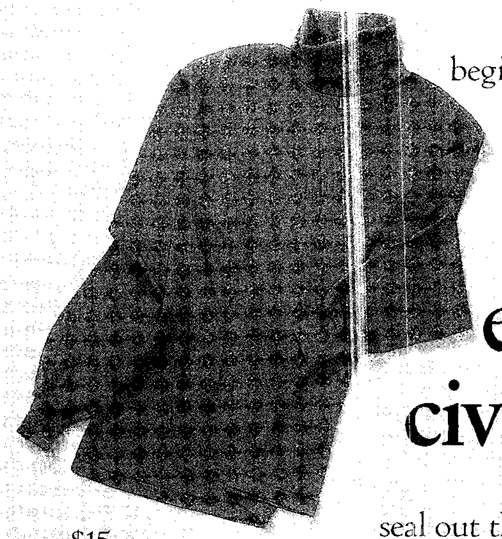

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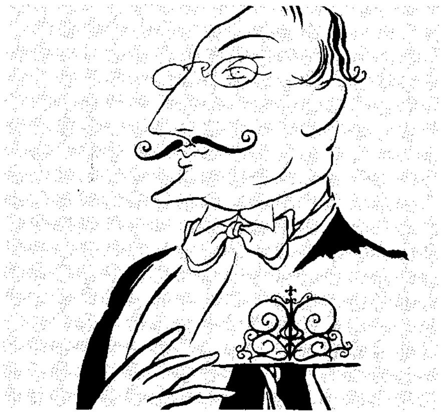

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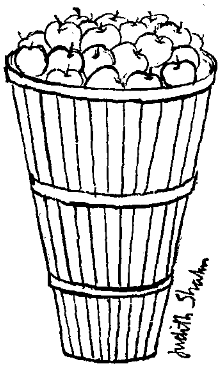
more involved in the process than in the product. While climbing in the Cascade Range, east of Seattle, during the late nineteen-sixties, he had come across an abandoned gold mine, the Honeymoon, at the foot of Mt. Index. He started bringing a packload of ore from the back of the shaft every time he came down from a trek. At home in his studio, he processed the ore, following a series of formulas inspired by "Pirotechnia" and Paracelsus. "I would laboriously crush up the rock in a mortar, thinking meditative thoughts about the alchemical green dragon, you know," he told me. "Then I would melt it down in a simple iron pot over the stove—that kind of thing—and when I needed more heat I could supply it with my welding torch. Berlinghettia would have approved, I'm sure—he always worked with the highest level of technology available—but Dean would probably have gone for cherrywood charcoal, or something."

The Honeymoon ore was very low-grade, and Acord was never able to carry out more than sixty pounds at a time. Altogether he produced only a few grams of pure gold, but in the process he refined his understanding of metal, and reëstablished a connection between his work and the natural world. Acord combined his gold with pure silver, purchased commercially, and then cast the alloy, electrum, in molds taken from the claws and shoulder bone of a desiccated cat, his drawing model of the moment. The claws went into little hammered-silver envelopes, and the envelopes went into his sculpture.



The next step was to inoculate the metal itself with magical essences. "I was working with Jung propped open on one side of the workbench, Paracelsus on the other. My materials were mostly silver and gold and lead, but when you make an alloy you add other things that affect the crystalline structure. I was trying out different organic materials reduced by tincturation, so that in fact almost no particles of the real essence went into the metal. I'd take a drop of blood or tears or semen in a cup of distilled water and shake the water up carefully, you know, reciting chants and watching the moon track through the sky. Then I'd put one drop of that on a Kleenex, wad it up, and throw it in the crucible."

Acord soon discovered that industrial alloying was still done in much the same way, though on a somewhat different scale. He had hired on as plant engineer—mechanic and troubleshooter—at a foundry in the town of Sultan, in the foothills of the Cascades. "My metallurgy had gone from the theoretical, theological, and esoteric to a time clock and a hundred tons a week. It was just right, just what I needed." The crew would tap off two hundred and fifty pounds of iron at a time, enough to fill twenty molds, and at that instant, just before pouring the ductile metal into the molds, they would add a cupful of inoculant. "It was a mixture of bismuth and sulfur, boron and—oh, potassiums and sodiums and other patented minerals. There must have been some magnesium in there, too, because it puffed off instantly, in a *big* flame. It immediately vaporizes, see, and, as it vaporizes, the information races through the metal. It works like a blueprint, like metallic DNA, to tell that metal what shape its crystals should be arranged in. In fact, there's almost no traceable amount of the material left behind, but it adds exactly what I had in mind, because the metal *remembers* it."

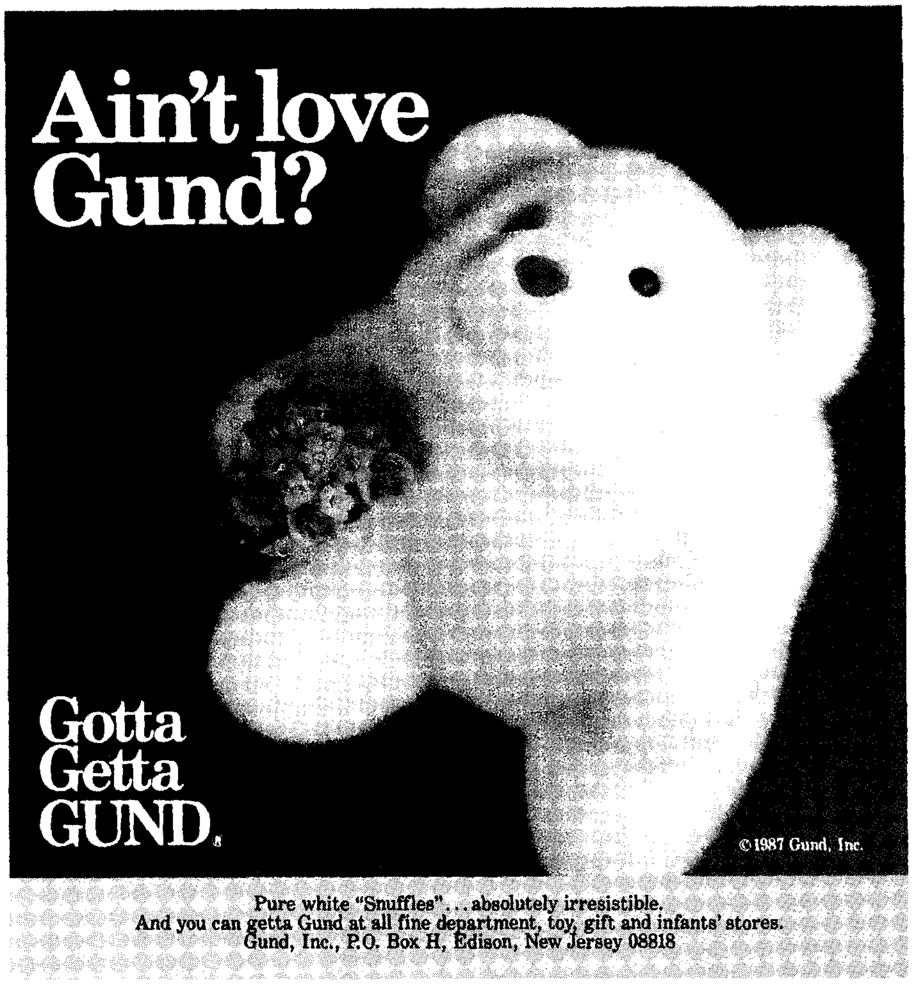
Acord was eager to experiment with the fusion of elements on any level—molecular, conceptual, or visual. One of his jewelry commissions, a pendant, featured an owl's foot—the genuine article, except that the talons had been replaced with little castings of electrum, the same ancient alloy he had used for the cat's claws. The owl's ankle was banded by a heavy silver cuff with a planished surface and a scattering of moonstones. The medieval design of the cuff and the deep russet tone of the owl's foot seemed to call for a golden finish, and that gave Acord an excuse to try out mercury flame gilding.

The alchemists, of course, loved mercury; it is the only metal that is liquid at room temperature, and, even better, it is also a solvent of gold. The combination of these two properties makes possible the fillings in your teeth. It also leads to the process of flame gilding. Medieval metallurgists discovered that they could saturate their mercury with gold—much as water can be saturated with salt—to produce a kind of liquid gold. Left alone, the mercury would eventually evaporate, leaving a finely divided gold powder. If the amalgam was painted on a metal, however, it could be heated to the point where the mercury fumed off just at the moment that the other metals fused, creating a skin of gold flash-plated on the surface.

Dean Andersen was not enthusiastic about the owl's-foot project. "Jim seems to have a fascination with the macabre," he told me. "I've never completely understood that side of him. In a sense, as an artist trying to make a living, it's sort of like he's butting his head up against the wall. When most people go to buy art, at their worst they want to decorate their house, or they want something pretty that, you know, makes them feel good. At their best, they'll meet you halfway. But Jim wants you to meet him completely on his territory. That's not bad in most art, but when you start making jewelry with bones in it you're kind of putting yourself on the spot."

Andersen also had reservations about flame gilding itself. "Dean was already growing cautious about the medical ramifications of certain sculptural processes," Acord recalls. "He had had a little bout of ill health there, and had decided that maybe being hunched over all these smoking crucibles of pewter and things might be having a lot to do with it." In the case of the flame gilding, Andersen was right to be concerned. As late as the nineteen-fifties, a British handbook of metalwork identified flame gilding as the most expensive and most durable method of applying gold plate, but failed to add that it is also the most hazardous. In the long run, the heavy-metal fumes will kill you. In the short run, they just cripple you and drive you insane. It is quite possible that the more obscure, occult passages in alchemical writing are a product not of mysticism but of mercury-vapor poisoning.

Acord figured that the risk of mercury poisoning was outweighed by the result he could achieve and the knowledge he would gain. The danger was irrelevant, except insofar as it added to the excitement. He went ahead with the owl's-foot project, departing from the medieval recipe only in the use of his trusty oxyacetylene torch. "What I did would be a punishable offense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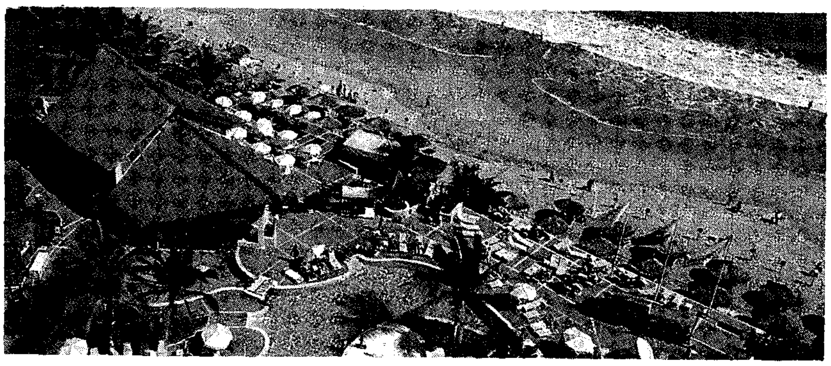

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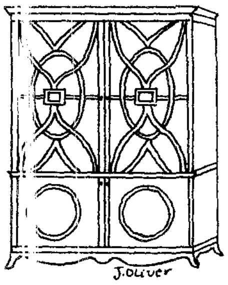
under E.P.A. standards. It might be a twenty-five-thousand-dollar hit, or something, for releasing mercury fumes into the air without a filter. Bad news. Irresponsible. I mean, I was upwind, for whatever good that might have done." He chuckled. "I noticed my fillings got a lot brighter, though. If I did it all the time, I probably wouldn't have to see the dentist as often."

IT was just about this time—the spring of 1973, to be precise—that Acord and I first met. My wife and I were living in a cottage on Mercer Island, a suburb of Seattle, and one day Jim simply appeared over the top of a twelve-foot laurel hedge in the front yard. Our landlady, a tough-talking, kindhearted schoolteacher named Kay Wooten, had asked him to trim it. Kay had been Gail Acord's best friend in graduate school, and she was also Jim's godmother. She used to hire him from time to time to do odd jobs, more out of a desire to give him some money than a need to get the chores done. For his part, Acord accepted the work more out of a desire to help Kay than a need for the little money she could offer. Somehow, the arrangement pleased them both. Acord had given Kay her own Scottish deerhound (a nephew of Gefion's, and a mixed blessing, named Douglas). He had also given her some of his early works of sculpture, including a small, rough (and, by then, broken) concrete casting of a helmeted, cone-breasted Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom and technical skill. The bust, in two pieces, sat in the woods beside the house. My discovery of the piece fulfilled Jim's childhood archeological fantasies; I did wonder about it. (I didn't find out for fifteen years that Jim had been its creator.)

It turned out that he and I had a few friends in common, but then everyone in Seattle seemed to know everyone else in those days. In any case, my wife and I ran into Acord at parties now and then, and sometimes he'd come by the house. There was not much chance to get to know him, however. He was preoccupied, as usual, with his jobs, his work, and his girlfriends, and he was spending most of his time near the town of Index, in the Cascades, where he'd made a down payment on a cabin. We went to visit him there one time, more for the mountain air than the art. We learned nothing at all of his alchemical experiments, and we saw very little of his work. The only piece I remember from that trip was a thick log, six feet high, stripped of bark and inset with bronze disks.

I reminded Acord of that sculpture when he and I went back to Index not long ago. We had driven up from Seattle one afternoon, stopping in Sultan to pick up cigarettes and snacks. Now we were sitting on the deck of a friend's house overlooking the Skykomish River, waiting until sunset to hike to our real destination, the falls nearby. Below us, the river, about a hundred feet wide at that point, swept by at a brisk but dignified clip; only the broad gravel wash on the far bank suggested what a torrent it could be during the spring runoff. "I always liked that piece," Acord said as he popped the cap on a beer—a local brew we had bought on the strength of its hand-printed label and the old saying that the closer the brewery, the better the beer. "I was already thinking about stone and steel, but wood and bronze was the best I could do at the time. See, I'd been wanting to make *big* stuff, really monumental sculpture, and I was looking for a way to increase my vocabulary. Well, jewelry had shown me that one way to do that was to combine different materials. Ray Jensen and Phil McCracken had always tried to steer me in the opposite direction, of course. They thought that it was impossible to express the essence of more than one material at a time, and in a way they were right." Acord took a swig and grimaced. We both held our bottles up to the light; there was a good inch of yeast in the bottom, clearly visible through the brown glass. "I mean, you could see it in a lot of sculpture. Sometimes the materials just didn't work together—kinda like this beer, in fact—and they were structurally weak as well. Dissimilar materials tend to decay at different rates, and often the bonding is the first thing to go." The challenge, then, was to take advantage of the interplay of unlike materials without undermining the physical and spiritual integrity of the sculpture.

As it happened, Acord had been working on the problem for years, without realizing it. Once he recognized the question, the answer came quickly, a gift from his old friends—birds' nests, seedpods, and the carcasses of crustaceans and small mammals. In particular, his drawings of bones and teeth revealed a firm, natural way to join dissimilar materials, and they also helped him understand the relationship between the materials themselves. Rough, porous bone and dense, glossy teeth, so dissimilar in appearance, were in fact just variations of a single material, produced by the same organism, by the same growth process—indeed, by the same cells—differing only in the details of their DNA. "And then I made the connection to the extraction of metal from stone, where the ore is crushed and refined and inoculated with a new crystalline code. Same process." This revelation gave a new dimension to his work. Now his purpose was not only to translate his ideas into metal and stone but also to perfect the idiom of the two materials, in order to express the essence of each and its relation to the other.



As for the materials themselves, Acord could eliminate most candidates simply by looking around Seattle. The politics of contemporary outdoor art—publicly funded, selected by committee, with construction and siting contracted to the lowest bidder—dictates the use of cheap materials. Most of the new commissions that Acord saw going up in the sixties and seventies were built of low-grade concrete, scrap carbon steel, discarded curbstones, and similar materials. As he knew from his own experience, many of these pieces would not last the lifetime of their creators. Furthermore, in a corrosive environment even good materials age fast, flaked away at the bottom by salt, melted down from the top by acid rain, and blackened all over by soot. The problem is compounded when different media are combined; indeed, the materials can be destructive of one another. Bronze and limestone, for example, look great together at first; that's why you see so many plaques and castings set in a limestone base. But after a few years and a few good rainstorms, the patina of the bronze begins to erode and drip down the face of the stone in moldy-looking streaks. Meanwhile, minute thermal expansions of the mounting pins pulverize their limestone sockets, so that the

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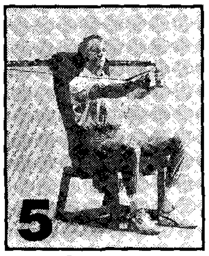

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bronze effectively loosens its own bonding. In order to survive in a corrosive atmosphere and a hostile environment (anticipating anything from random vandalism, through a major earthquake, to a full-scale nuclear attack), Acord figured, his work would require materials of high density, low surface porosity, and low chemical reactivity. The only materials that filled the bill were high-grade stainless steel and granite.

Since his first step up from salt blocks to brick, Acord had pushed himself toward ever more durable and intractable substances. The choice of granite was a logical extension of that process, but the decision involved more than logic. As it happened, Acord had established an intimate relationship with granite long before he began to carve seriously. For a number of years, he was an avid rock-climber, of the technical sort. When he was most deeply involved in the sport, he regularly led groups at the 5.8 level, at a time when the highest degree of difficulty was 5.10. The top level has since been pushed to 5.14, and Acord has retired from active climbing; nevertheless, he has occasionally practiced techniques at 5.11 and 5.12. In other words, he excelled in rock climbing, just as he had in riflery. Technical climbing demanded strength, courage, and, even more than riflery, sustained concentration and precise coördination. It was a lot more thrilling, too. During the early seventies, Acord spent a lot of time spread-eagled on sheer escarpments, trusting his fingers and toes to grip the granite, and trusting the granite to hold his weight. With adrenaline focussing his attention, and with his eyes three inches away from the rock, he had ample opportunity to study granite at close range.

Acord left a lot of himself on the rocks. His first wife was a climber; climbing was, in fact, the basis of their relationship—not quite enough to sustain the marriage for more than a few months. The cliffs had claimed the lives of several of his friends, including his closest climbing buddy, who fell to his death before Acord's eyes. Acord himself got his share of scrapes and bruises, and broken bones now and then—nothing so serious that he couldn't go back up as soon as the cast was set. But it was not enough for him to cohabit with the rock; inevitably, he had to try to shape it. Every few years, starting in the early *nineteen-sixties*, he took a crack at some small granite boulder he had brought in from the mountains or the beach. Like a recalcitrant lover, the stone refused to yield. Matched against Acord's hammer and untipped, mild-steel chisels, the granite always won.

IN 1974, on the eve of his thirtieth birthday, Acord made a list. He had been an aspiring artist for twenty years and a professional sculptor for twelve. All that time, he had been gathering ideas and learning techniques. Yet now that he finally knew what he wanted to do, he still didn't know quite how to do it. So he wrote down all the skills he would need to make the kind of sculpture he dreamed of, and thus charted a quest for the status of master in a guild of which he was the only member. Happily, he could already check off some items on the list, like welding and wood carving. He could improve his knowledge of other areas, like pattern-making and casting, in shops around Seattle. A few, more arcane skills, like electroplating, could be put off for a few years, but he knew where to go to learn. Granite carving was his highest priority, and his greatest problem. His own experiments were getting him nowhere, and there was no one around to teach him.

When Acord felt defeated by his struggles with stone, cemeteries gave him hope. He was not concerned with the contents of the tombs, or with the artistry of the carvings. He was interested in the qualities of stone and the techniques of stonework, and the graves gave him a syllabus for his study. The dates of the markers provided an accurate gauge of the durability of different varieties of stone, and the markers themselves offered a glossary of carving vocabulary—ornamental lettering, folds of cloth, surface textures, scrollwork, and so on. "I could walk in a cemetery and I could look at those homely little carvings in granite and say, 'If I could do that, I could do what I'm trying to do.' " He supplemented his graveyard investigations with research in libraries, and gradually he grew familiar with the varieties of stone: different grades of marble from Italy, Vermont, and Tennessee; limestone from Indiana; and, of course, granite—red from South Dakota, pink from North Carolina, black from Pennsylvania and California (and now India

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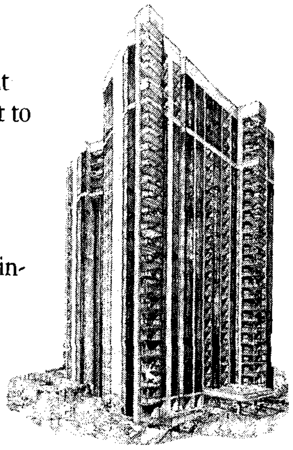

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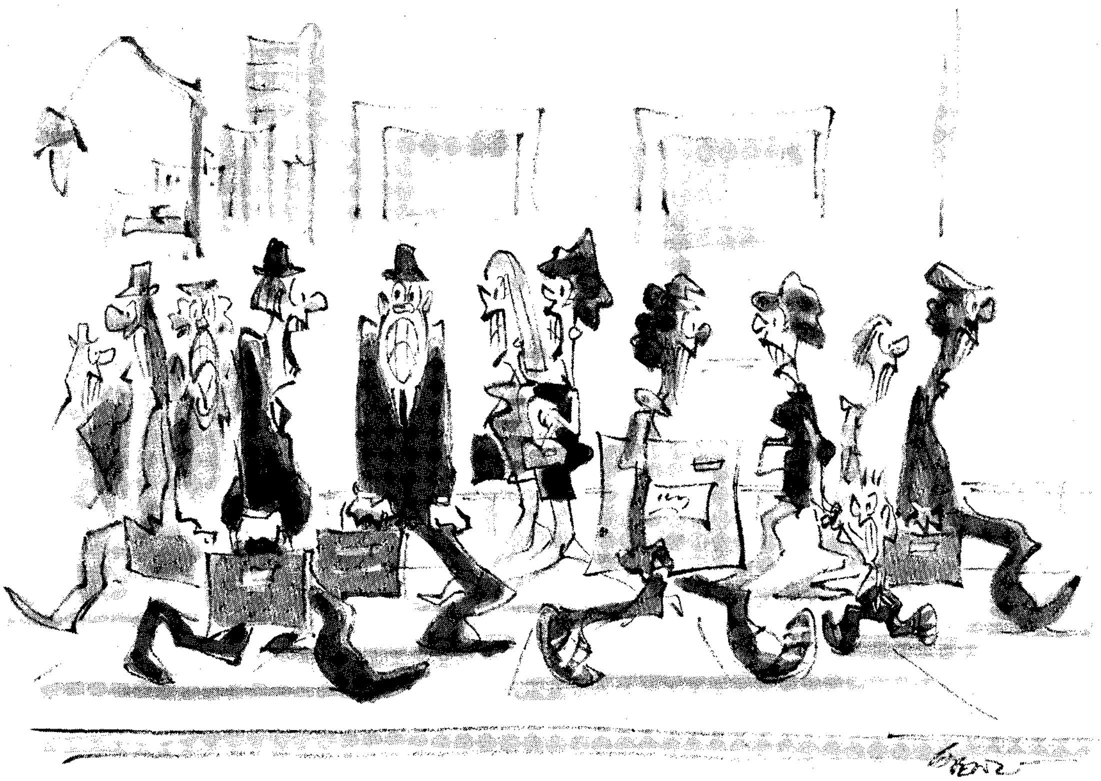


"I suppose one could say that stress is an inescapable part of the human condition."

• •

and Finland), gray from Georgia, Washington, and New England, a pale brown from New Hampshire (prized by some, but not by Acord, for its fleshlike tone), and a blotchy Midwestern blend of pink, brown, and gray, known in the stone trades as "pukestone."

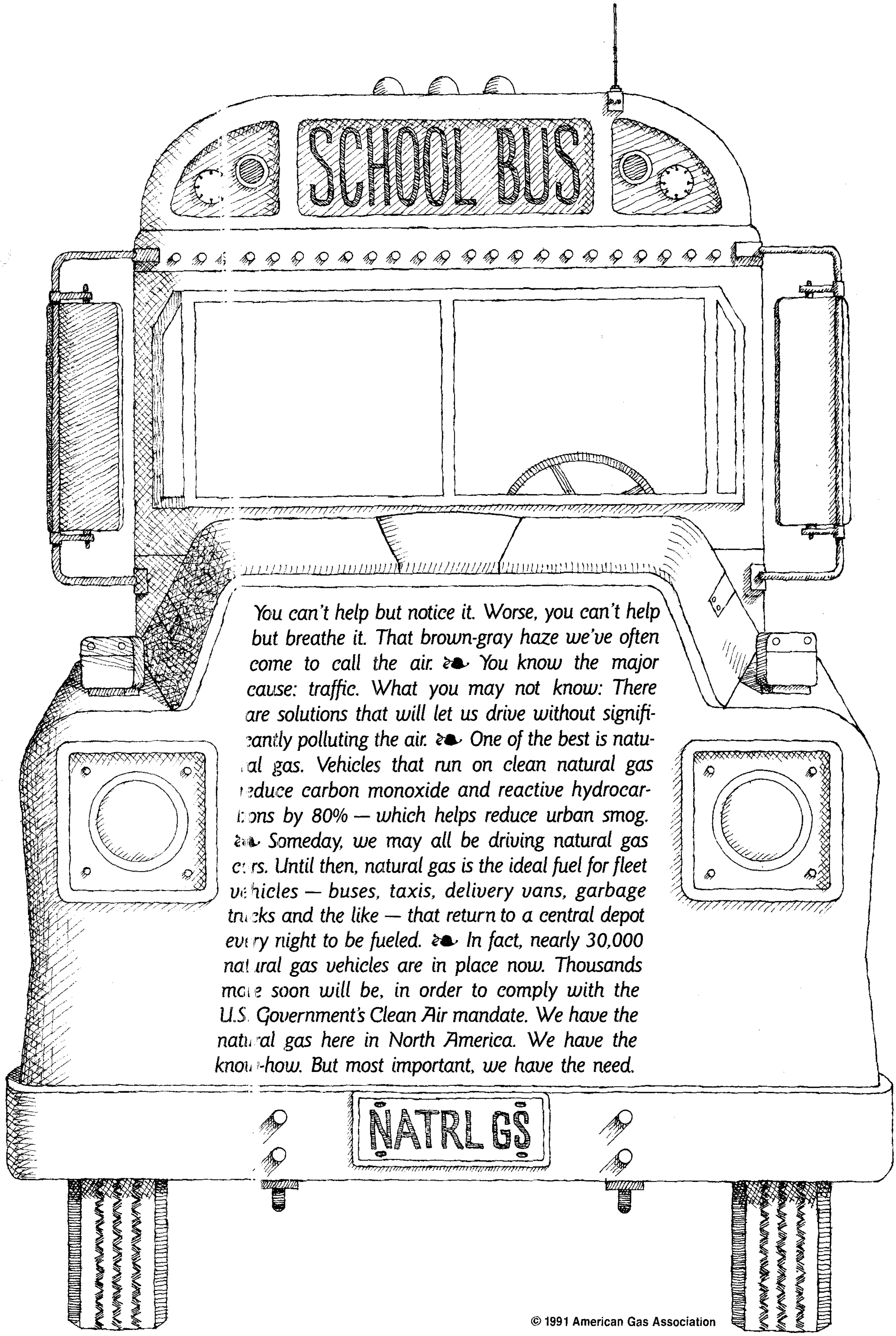
Visits to the back lots of monument dealers provided him with further information. At one point, he went out to visit the quarries at Big Stone Lake, in South Dakota, where he found huge saws and cranes and polishers—fascinating pieces of equipment—but no carvers. In fact, he discovered, most major quarries around the country specialize in mass-produced tombstones and cladding panels—the exterior veneer that the *Times* critic Paul Goldberger has called "stone wallpaper." If he wanted to carve granite, he was told again and again, there was only one place to learn: Barre, Vermont. That was good news, in a way, because no stone he had studied held up better than Barre granite; in some cases, the lettering on Barre stones was still clear and crisp, the polish smooth and shiny after a century or more. Best of all, Barre had the color he loved most, the luminous gray of the Cascade mountains.

The trouble was, he didn't really want to go. Acord had been a nomad for most of his life, but always within a narrow territory. Now that he had a place of his own, he was not eager to pull up and move across country. He was particularly reluctant to leave behind the falls on the south fork of the Skykomish, his favorite spot for pondering the problems of art and life. It was there that he had drawn up his list, and there, too, that he had experienced some early revelations about the unity of mass and void and the relationship of sculptor and sculpture. "But then, in another visit to the falls, meditating again on the granite and the water, I realized that I had to go to Barre," he told me. "I thought, Aha, you know, two things are there—the granite that I liked, just visually, and also the skill level. It's funny when you think about it, but in order to get deeper into the mountains I had to leave."

IN December, 1978, Acord set out for Barre, with Gefion riding shotgun in the cab of his pickup. The trip lasted nearly seven months, but by the time he arrived the design for his masterwork was substantially complete. Characteristically, Acord took the long way around, heading first for Los Angeles, where he visited friends. Next, he devoted a full week to an empirical investigation of the durability of stone in the graveyards of New Orleans. Even there, in what Acord calls "a hothouse of corrosive atmosphere," Barre gray held up well long after other stones had melted. He went on to visit his parents, who had retired to Florida, but his search for reconciliation (and an advance on his small inheritance) ended in a draw; his mother, ever the schoolteacher, dictated spelling lessons, which he painstakingly copied in his sketchbook and then promptly forgot.

Turning north, Acord settled in for six weeks with a childhood friend in Washington, D.C., where he was pursuing research at the National Gallery and the Library of Congress. He started out looking for documentary evidence of the durability of granite, and what he discovered more than confirmed his own observations and instinct. Solid-granite batholiths were the preferred location for underground doomsday command centers, like Cheyenne Mountain, in Colorado. Granite in general has the capacity, unparalleled among other naturally occurring materials, to withstand both the blast and the radiation of a nuclear explosion. "The heat will do some damage to the surface," Acord acknowledges, "but when it comes to structural integrity what you're worried about is the shock wave. Well, at about ten thousand metres you'd have virtually no damage. And really sound granite may very well survive a nuclear explosion as near as a thousand metres. If you're talking about sculpture, you know, you might lose a nose, fingertips, but the statue would remain."

The different figures on blast resistance showed that while all granite is hard, not all granites are created equal. The stone begins life deep in the core of the earth as a molten dough that cools into crystalline silicates—feldspars, hornblendes, micas, and quartz. If the



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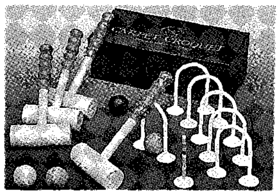

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magma cools slowly as it seeps to the surface, the different crystals may continue to grow until they are several inches across. This mottled texture is fascinating to observe but unstable under stress: hairline cracks between the crystals make the stone brittle and fragile, and the unequal hardness of the particles makes it jarring to carve. In a fast-cooling stone—like Barre gray, as it happens—the crystals never have a chance to grow. The tiny particles blend tightly together in a uniform fabric of high density and low absorptivity.

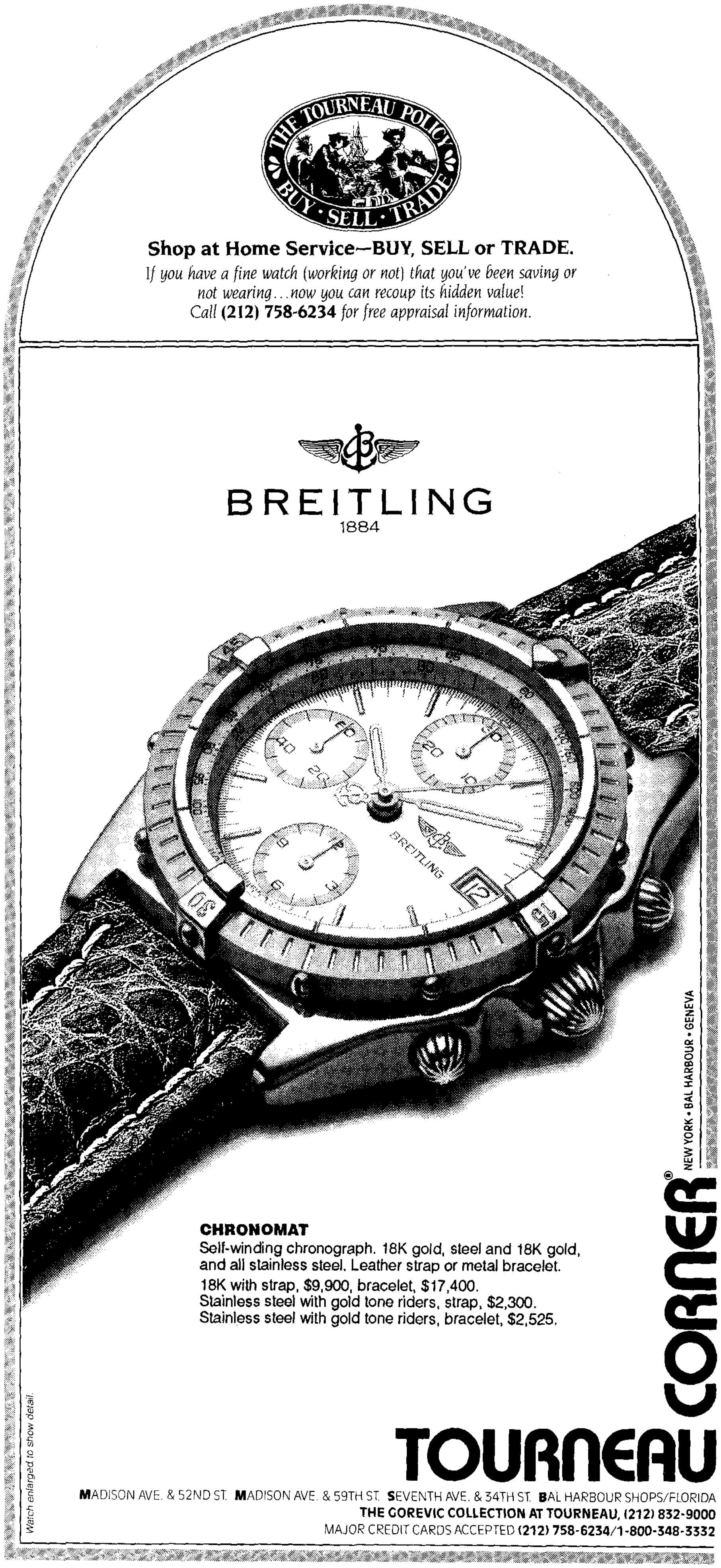
The feldspars, hornblendes, micas, and quartz make up about ninety-eight per cent of the rock, and most chemical analyses of the stone stop there, listing the final two per cent as "trace elements." But those trace elements were precisely what Acord was looking for. He wanted to identify the characteristic metal of granite—the one he could extract from the stone to create an integral fusion of dissimilar materials. What he found was uranium. Amid the apatite, allanite, ilmenite, zircon, and other elements, granite contained enough uranium (as a chemical compound) to make the stone measurably radioactive. Indeed, a January, 1980, article in *Scientific American* later pointed out that granite was the main conduit for bringing uranium to the surface of the earth. The heavy metal was most easily recoverable from sedimentary deposits formed as the granite eroded, the authors noted, but they concluded that if the price of uranium rose high enough, granite itself could be profitably mined for its uranium content. (Indeed, such a mine already existed in Namibia.) That reminded Acord of the medieval practice of burning classical marble sculptures for their lime content: a sobering but somehow exciting thought. He later turned up a study published by the Atomic Energy Commission—which naturally liked to proclaim its own safety standards—showing that the average nuclear worker received an annual radiation dose comparable to that of a porter standing patiently in front of the granite walls of Grand Central Terminal. On the surface, the claim would seem to rank with Ronald Reagan's contention that trees produce pollution. On the other hand, perhaps that's why it's so difficult these days to find a porter. In any event, Acord's interest in durability had driven him to a material that could resist radioactivity and yet was itself mildly radioactive. He had his characteristic metal, but he could not use it in a visible combination with the granite.

Acord's next stop was New York. He was drawn to the stone, bones, and fossils in the American Museum of Natural History, of course, but he spent most of the next three weeks poring over the medieval and Renaissance art in the Metropolitan Museum and the Cloisters. He was particularly impressed by the reliquaries, designed to preserve sacred objects, and the monstrances, designed to display the Host before Communion. "I already knew of sculpture as a way of preserving and communicating ideas and emotions over endless spans of time, and I must have known about reliquaries in an abstract sort of way," he told me. "I'd been putting things in sculpture for a long time, after all, though that wasn't the *purpose* of my work. I guess the idea of actually preserving an object really hit me in the Cloisters. It crossed my mind that here these medieval sculptors had an excellent reason for making durable sculpture, and that was because it was going to contain something sacred. What also struck me was the visual relationships between mass and void, the outer surfaces and the inner preserved things. Quite frankly, I even found the empty reliquaries especially poigent." He meant poignant. "There are some, you know, in which I suppose the fingernail of the saint got boosted, or the hair of the Virgin turned to dust, or maybe some cold night someone threw a sliver of the True Cross into the fire to warm up. There's always the human element that haunts these things."

Acord had been doing sketches of a horse's skull since 1977, playing with ideas for his first major granite carving. He now began to see the skull as part of a large containment vessel, to be titled "Monstrance for a Grey Horse." He was not yet sure what he wanted to preserve; the answer—uranium—was already inscribed in his sketchbook, but it would be several years before he discovered the connection. Before he left New York, however, Acord did manage to solve another design problem: the visible combination of stone and metal. The medieval galleries of the Met—specifically, Arms and Armor—once again provided the key. "I'd been thinking about—oh, maybe stainless-steel eyeballs or teeth," he said. "That was one solution. But my drawings of crabs and shrimps and things had also encouraged me to think about the concept of the exoskeleton, a hard outer surface with a different material inside. So when I saw the medieval equestrian armor I knew it was just what I was looking for. Two different materials, two shapes that had been designed to go together. I could show their relationship more clearly by leaving a space between them, the void that would have been filled with skin and hair and flesh. It all clicked right in. The connections— Connections like that seem to happen almost instantaneously. I mean, the visualization process is faster than even a speed freak's words could keep up with." Acord caught his breath. "I don't know, I'm really best off when I don't try to describe some of these things. English is a second language to me, you know, as are all other human tongues. But these are things that are revealed in the way the wind blows a crumpled newspaper down the street sometimes, moving from shadow to shade and sunlight again. I can see it in the shapes. I mean, you know right away when you've solved some problems. A whole bunch of things drop into place." He could see the shapes now: an invisible cylinder in a frustum, a horse's skull with mask. The materials, too, were beginning to come clear: a sacred substance embedded in granite; the granite sheathed (in part) with stainless steel. It was time to begin work.

ACORD finally reached Vermont in June of 1979. Even before he arrived in Barre, he was sure he had come to the right place. Once he had crossed over from New Hampshire at White River Junction, he began to meet more and more tractor-trailers loaded with granite. Then, on the outskirts of Barre, an eight-by-twelve-foot monolith welcomed him to the Granite Center of the World—a claim endorsed by the Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis, and Jaycees, their logos and meeting times sandblasted into the stone.

Acord checked in to the cheapest motel he could find, and began to scout



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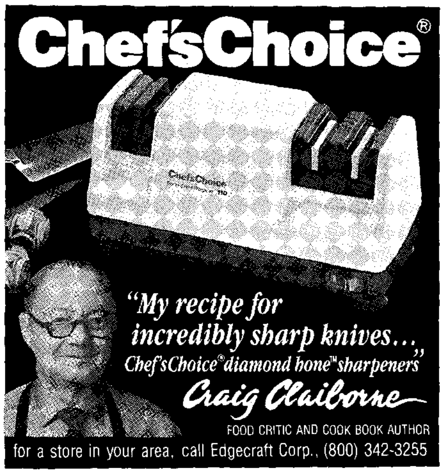

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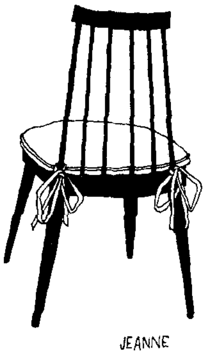
out his new home. Everywhere he looked, there was stone. In residential neighborhoods, rickety frame houses stood on granite foundations, and mailboxes rested on granite posts. Downtown buildings were mainly brick—here, as elsewhere in this country, the distinction of solid stone construction was reserved for banks, churches, and the public library—but even modest office buildings were massively trimmed with granite along their bases, rooflines, corners, and windows. Underfoot, the walkways were covered in cobblestones, pebbles, or gravel. A powdery dust thickened the river and settled by the roadside in icy-looking patches of mud.



The source of it all was the quarries—steep pits up to five hundred feet deep, sunk into the hills around town. The quarrymen used high-velocity torches, twenty-foot channelling drills, and delicate charges of primer cord to split blocks weighing thousands of tons. The Rock of Ages Corporation, the biggest employer in Barre, claims the world record for the largest single block of stone ever quarried: it measured twenty-four feet by eighty by two hundred, and weighed about thirty-two thousand five hundred tons, or nearly half the current annual production. In terms of sheer weight, the granite business was a heavy industry.

Barre claims to be the world's largest quarrier of dimensional granite. No quarry offers a better stone. The quick-cooled vein of rock that runs through the town has a remarkably fine and even texture. Barre granite gets its soft, dove-gray color from two kinds of feldspar—oligoclase mixed with a bit of microcline. Two types of mica—colorless muscovite and black biotite—sprinkle the stone with a salt-and-pepper glitter. An unusually high quartz content, up to thirty per cent in some samples, adds sparkle and strength. In all, Barre gray is nearly as hard as sapphire and yet is as accommodating to the carver as a granite can be.

For more than a century, Barre has survived, and sometimes thrived, on "memorial art." The Barre Granite Association, the manufacturer's trade group, boasts that its members will memorialize you in any way you choose—with a lifelike trout the size of a small shark, or a three-foot soccer ball, or a full-size replica of your Mercedes limousine. Most of their offerings, however, consist of mass-produced gravestones, ground out, literally, on an assembly line. Diamond-tipped rotary blades, up to twelve feet in diameter, or gangs of wire saws, up to seven strands at a time, cut the blocks of rough stock into slabs, like so many slices of bread. Automated polishers with a series of graded gr[illegible] grind the surface to a mirrorlike finish. Vertical wire saws, like giant jigsaws, shape the stone. Stencil-cutters slap on adhesive rubber mats and slice out patterns with X-Acto knives. Sandblasters, in big rubber suits and helmets that make them look like astronauts, rout out borders and roses, names and dates, with jet-propelled steel shot.

In the old days, floral work and lettering were sculptors' jobs—stages on the path to mastery, or to a journeyman's career. New technology has taken most of those jobs away, just as changing tastes have diminished the call for some of the carver's more elaborate skills. In 1900, the industry employed over a hundred sculptors (known as "sculptures" in the local dialect). By 1948, the number had dropped to about ten, and the manufacturers of gravestones had to recruit five new carvers from Italy. When Acord arrived, there were seventeen sculptors, with steady, low-paid work and a precarious future. They lived for the occasional commission of a full-round statue, but they lived off a constant demand for low-relief niches in upright dies.

In all, Barre seemed a town out of place and out of time, a Depression-era industrial city in miniature, set amid the covered bridges, cow pastures, maple groves, and ski slopes of central Vermont. But Acord didn't mind. After three days of exploration, he wa[illegible] only slightly disillusioned. The brutal cubism of the quarries offended his rock-climber's sensibilities, but he couldn't help admiring the scale of the work; after all, he dreamed of carving mountains himself someday. The sculpture that came out of the sheds had no more appeal for him than concrete foundations or welded sewer pipe, but he still longed to learn the skill that had produced it. In any event, he was well beyond the point of no return. He had left New York with his last twenty dollars in his pocket, and the motel was running him six dollars a day.

When Acord stopped in at the Barre Granite Association to inquire about an apprenticeship, he was told that there was only one place to go—the Frank Gaylord Sculpture Studios. The large manufacturers would not take on an inexperienced carver, and most independent sculptors could not afford to, but Gaylord's shop was just the right size. And Gaylord himself enjoyed a reputation as Barre's most distinguished artist: he was a member of the National Sculpture Society—a prosperous group of corporate portraitists and Franklin Mint types—and his work was frequently featured in *Barre Life*, *Stone in America*, and other organs of the monument industry. He could carve as well as anyone, but he preferred to concentrate on design and hire others to cut the stone. Acord went to visit Gaylord on a Monday, and by Wednesday he was at work.

I once asked Gaylord what Acord had been like as an apprentice, and he launched into a litany of tales about Acord's prodigious capacity for alcohol, his string of girlfriends, and his many colorful exploits, including the time he disguised himself as a blind man so that Gefion (also in disguise) could accompany him on an airplane as the world's tallest Seeing Eye dog. Of Acord's work Gaylord said, "He could do anything. He could weld, he could do the carpentry, he could cast better than I ever could. He had some difficulty with faces, but as long as a thing would hold still Jim could draw it. And sculpture, any art, is all drawing. You either draw with a chisel or a paintbrush or a pencil or a modelling scratch—it's all the same mental process. Now, not everyone agrees with that, of course—one guy used to tell me, 'Pencil don't cut nothin'.' But I say if you can do it with a pencil you can do it with a chisel."

Acord spent his first month in the studio on probation, roughing out sculptures and doing odd jobs around the shop. Then, when it came time for him to join the Granite Cutters' International Association, Gaylord gave him a test. He sketched a niche on a granite slab, drew a line through the middle, and proceeded to carve out one side, leaving the other side for Acord to finish. "That's what I do with any new man that I'm giving a tryout," Gaylord told me. "I say, 'You look at me and see what I can do. I'm not showing off, I'm just going to show you what I can do.' And you say to yourself, 'If that son of a bitch can do it, I can do it.' And Jim could. He wasn't afraid."

A modern stone shed is a far cry from the romantic image of a sculptor's studio, with soft shafts of light cutting through a faint haze of stone dust, and the mellifluous *chink-chink-chink* of chisel on rock. Most of the carving these days is done with pneumatic tools, and the deep throbbing of the air compressor, felt as much as heard, provides a constant background. Plug drills, used to rough out the sculpture, look and sound like small jackhammers. Smaller carving machines, with pistons no more than an inch and a quarter in diameter, put out a high-pitched chatter. Tiny diamond-tipped rotary saws—a recent innovation—screech and grind like a satanic dentist's drill.

Acord likes to point out that sculpture is the most capital intensive of the arts, that stonework is the most expensive brand of sculpture, and that granite carving is the most expensive kind of stonework. A granite carver's tool chest may hold over a hundred chisels, with list prices ranging from seventeen-fifty, for an eighth-inch carbide-tipped machine chisel, through fifty-two dollars, for a nine-point (a square-shanked bit with a head like a small meat tenderizer), to more than a hundred and fifty dollars, for an eight-cut bush chisel (a club sandwich of eight thin blades bolted onto a single shank). A sculptor needs from three to eight duplicates of each, because the blades lose their edge after fifteen minutes of carving at top speed. Sculptors sharpen their tools themselves, but the carbide tips must be replaced from time to time, and the shanks sometimes shatter. The tool bill for a full-time stone carver can run to several hundred dollars a week.

Even with a carving machine, stonework is exhausting, and dangerous as well. Workers are supposed to wear hard hats and gloves, an air mask for

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In his early weeks in Barre, Acord had no objection to executing other people's work: it allowed him to develop his technique and study the design solutions of different sculptors. In a way, he actually relished the anonymity: after his first visit to New York, in fact, he had seriously contemplated reincorporating himself as the Unknown Master of the Inner Cloister (but decided instead to stick with the name he had chosen in 1975, Atomic Plasma Sculpture Works). The steady diet of pious images soon got on his nerves, however, and after a couple of months with Gaylord he decided to set up a studio of his own, in a small warehouse. (He continued to work part time for Gaylord.) Within a few weeks he had acquired a compressor, suction, carving machines, and blades, all bought at auction from retiring carvers and bankrupt stone sheds. He had a bed, a drawing table and chair, a Primus stove and a bar refrigerator, and a space heater powerful enough to thaw his hands (and not much else). He had picked out a spot in the quarry that looked particularly promising, and ordered a three-ton chunk from the next block to come up from that area. Meanwhile, he took some grout—waste granite—from Gaylord's studio, and began to experiment with designs of his own.

The first night, almost as soon as he started working, there was a knock on the door. Louis Partlow, the business representative of the Granite Cutters' International Association, was curious to find out why a union member was cutting stone after hours. Acord invited him in to see for himself, but Partlow declined. A week later, after carving in his own studio through the weekend, Acord arrived at work on Monday to find the union representative registering a complaint with Gaylord. Partlow *knew* that no worker in his right mind would carve for the fun of it, and he had concluded that Acord must be making "black markers"; that is, cut-rate gravestones that took profits from the manufacturers and wages from the union men. Articles 5 and 19 of the contract between the granite manufacturers and the G.C.I.A. expressly forbade any union member to cut stone in any place outside the shed where he was employed, and at any time outside the normal working hours. Exceptions had to be approved in writing by Louis Partlow himself. Violators were subject to dismissal from their jobs and suspension from the union.

In a conversation I once had with Partlow, he had little to say about Acord ("A good boy, a nice young sculpture"), but he was eager to discuss the union's warm relations with the manufacturers ("Fabulous"). Partlow's forebears would not have expected this response. Ninety years ago, Acord often points out, the unions were radical, sculptors led the unions, and men gave their lives for what they believed in. In those days, Barre was a regular stop on speaking tours by the likes of Emma Goldman, Big Bill Haywood, Mother Jones, and Eugene V. Debs. In recent years, however, the G.C.I.A. has grown weaker and less militant. Acord decided to ignore the union. He simply kept on carving while the union rep kept on complaining. Then, in 1980, Acord invited everyone in the industry to a Halloween party at his studio. Two hundred people showed up, including Louis Partlow. "He didn't stay long," Acord recalled recently. "About ten minutes. That was long enough to get a good look at 'Monstrance' and an eyeful of a lot of women roller-skating in the middle of the floor. I think it was all too much for him, and after that there were no more complaints about black markers."

WHEN Partlow met "Monstrance," Acord had been working on the sculpture for six months; the four-foot pedestal was nearly complete, and the outline of the horse's skull was vaguely visible at the top. By the time Acord left Barre, in 1981, the skull had clearly emerged from the stone, but it was not until 1986 that he felt the work worthy of his signature. (He carved it on the bottom, where it will not be seen.) Even now, "Monstrance" is still far from finished. Acord has left some webbing—supporting stone—in the nose and mouth, to be cut away when the piece is installed. The two-foot-high two-stepped, bevelled-edge base with rock-pitched sides—a difficult stoneworker's technique used to imitate natural stone—will not be completed until the final site is selected. The metal helmet (which Acord now hopes to cast from a classified alloy of titanium) will require substantial funding, and also permission from the Department of Defense. Finally, of course, there is the nuclear material. In June of 1989, Acord cored a two-foot cylinder in the base where the Fiesta ware will be stored, but the container has yet to be constructed and filled.

The slow progress is largely the result of Acord's difficulties in financing the work, but it also reflects the complexity of the piece and the perfectionism of its creator. Acord wanted "Monstrance" to be a masterpiece in the medieval sense—a work that demonstrated all the skills required of a master craftsman. In the stonework, at least, he has reached his goal, displaying the full vocabulary of surfaces and techniques cited in the Stoneworkers' Manual.

The column tapers from eighteen by thirty-one inches at the bottom to eleven by twenty-four inches at the top. Its surface has the texture of very fine sandpaper, apparently smooth to the eye but rough enough to refract a lot of light; depending on the time of day, the color runs from ghostly gray to sooty white. Acord could have achieved more or less the same shape and surface by having the rough block cut with a wire saw and then blasted with ball bearings to produce a sparkly "steeled" finish. Instead, he chose to cut down to the trapezoidal planes with plug drills, pound away the excess granite with a four-point, rough out the surface with a nine-point, and finish it with a four-cut bush chisel. The only evidence of his hard work and careful engineering is small brush marks, like faint brushstrokes, left by the four parallel blades.

The sides of the pedestal meet in bevelled margins that taper from about two inches in width to an inch and a half, emphasizing the upward thrust of the frustum. Acord worked out the proportions by eye (and a lot of heavy

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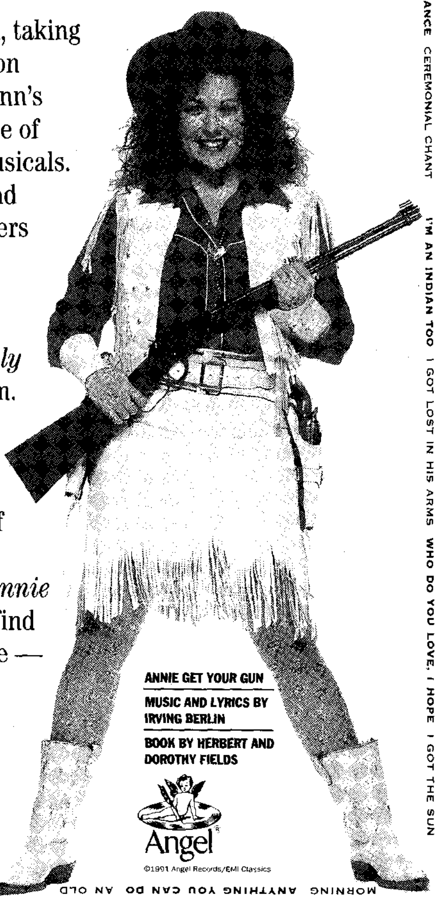

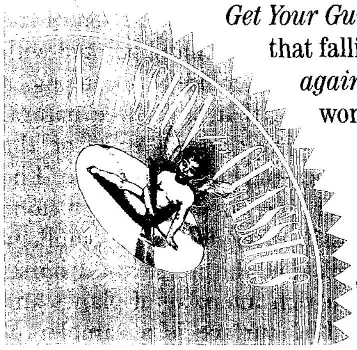

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labor), and then discovered that the relation of all the complex angles corresponded to some auspicious architectural formula (which he can no longer remember). Certainly the result looks inevitable, like the fluted bulge on a Doric column. To heighten the contrast with the bushed surface of the sides, Acord planed down the margins with a two-inch-wide chisel held almost parallel to the stone. When the quartz crystals are rubbed flat by this method, there are fewer facets to throw back the light, and the stone takes on a bluish cast. The technique, known as bluing, leaves a slight roughness to the touch, but the texture is as close to a polish as you can get with a carving machine. Bluing and bushing are often used together to enhance three-dimensional effects, especially in deep-flowing corrugations in the robes of saints and Virgins. Side by side, the surfaces seem to differ not in texture but in light and color. The combination is subtle, a kind of tangible chiaroscuro.

On "Monstrance," the tapered pedestal leads the eye to the horse's head. Above a crisp border at the top of the column, the stone is hand pointed with a hammer and chisel, producing a pebbly texture that looks like natural granite, a fine-grained echo of the planned rock-pitching on the base. The skull itself rises out of the rough stone like a fossil. After the subtle simplicity of the column, the horse head bursts forth in a rich interplay of planes and curves. The surface is a sampler of finishing techniques, yielding a range of colors from bone white to the slate-blue shade of the North Atlantic in winter. To bring out a sun-bleached brightness along the top of the nose and cheeks, Acord attacked the stone with a single chisel perpendicular to the surface, cracking the crystals one at a time. The eye sockets sink two inches into the skull, their sides polished to enhance the darkness and their bottoms bushed to give just a twinkle of light from within. The zygomatic arch, or cheek, a blued shadow on its underside, bends sharply beneath the eye. The molars, each one different from its neighbor, line up evenly, six to a side, to divide the skull horizontally. The elliptical mouth cuts clear through the stone, a small void within the mass. Different levels of polish give the gleam of enamel to the teeth and the slickness of saliva to the mouth.

The skull does not reveal all its riches at first glance; indeed, some changes in texture are detectable only to the touch. Seen in profile—that is, from the front of the sculpture—the head at first appears to be a starkly literal rendition of animal bone, austere, naturalistic, and nearly two-dimensional. As you shift your position, however, the piece comes alive. The shapes are so varied and so complex that the slightest change in angle alters your entire impression of the work. Viewed head on, the skull sweeps back in radical perspective, the polished incisors project forward in a menacing smile, the cheekbones spread out like wings, and the eye sockets flare in a furious stare. The back of the head appears to be an entirely different sculpture; it resembles an abstract, low-relief Romanesque return, the corner decoration in a frieze. Only the very tall (or someone with a stool handy) can see the domed cranium, surmounted by the crossing of the parietal bones.

I have thought, from time to time, that "Monstrance" might be a white knight from some gargantuan chess set, or a memento mori for a Horseman of the Apocalypse. Acord maintains, however, that he just liked the way the skull looked. "Well, the horse was a shape I was familiar with," he reminded me once. "After all, I'd been a cowboy for a year. Proportion and size were real important, too, and a horse's skull was just the thing for a stone that was five feet high, with a top two feet long by a foot wide. It also gave me a chance to work with a long linear shape, which is much less boring than a spherical shape like a human skull."

"But the more I look at it . . ." I said.

"The more abstract it gets, yeah. And I know I can clearly remember putting away some of the horses' teeth that I was looking at and saying, 'To hell with it. Y'know, it's time to actually start developing the form here.' There comes a moment when you've got enough confidence to let your hands carve by themselves. The mind disengages, it coasts, and the saurian brain takes over."

"Saurian brain?"

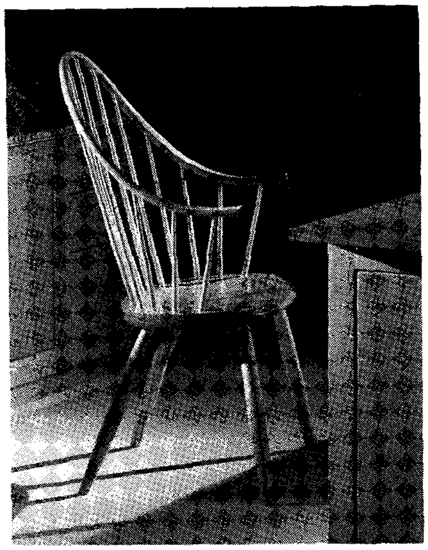
"It's your lizard brain," he said. "I love that—lizard brain. It's something very primitive, very basic, that you don't consciously control. In a way, you don't even need your eyes, but it's fun to watch the process as it unfolds. And *that* frees your mind to think ahead and imagine different possibilities. It's a higher state—I don't know how else to describe it. Your hands become an extension of your imagination, you're playing with form while you're carving, and the sculpture comes to life before your eyes. So the horse's skull was just a departure point. But it's still pretty close to the real thing. In the end, it turned out that the dimensions of the carving came within about one per cent of the real skulls I was looking at."

"The lower jaw isn't there," I pointed out.

"That's right, it isn't there. But the *shape* is there. Some of the subtleties—the way that mandible does a little double turn, for instance—now, those things in the end got very abstract. But the outer mass and form and direction of angle are just right to actually make the jaw work. And those upper teeth—Well, in fact, I've had two veterinarians look at it, and they were just flabbergasted, you know. They'd turn to me and shake their heads and say, '*Good* teeth.' "

ACORD and I were walking in Hope Cemetery, which holds the largest, most elaborate collection of granite art in Barre, and perhaps the nation. As we walked, Acord pointed out various wonders of Barre craftsmanship: a full-round angel in front of a rock-pitched cross (a difficult trick to achieve without breaking the wings); a twelve-foot sarcophagus hollowed out from one end (a job that meant weeks of tunnelling for some unfortunate carver). "You know, for the past fifty—no, one hundred—years, the vast majority of practicing professional artists have come from backgrounds where to actually *do* something was not part of the program. The idea was enough. And, as a consequence, artists have been divorced from the mundane applications of the skills that they might use to express themselves. In other words, they don't paint billboards for a living. There are exceptions, of course. Andy Warhol was one, but he drew a different lesson from his commercial experience. Most of the others aren't oriented in that direction at all, so even the best of their work has a certain shoddiness to it, technically speaking. And often that hasn't detracted from the power of the art in any way. Vincent van Gogh comes to mind here. He wasn't a very careful painter, you know, and they're having a lot of trouble preserving some of his paintings. Now, I don't hold that against Vincent at all. He was doing a helluva job, and his mind was on other things. But that made it easier for a whole school of people coming along afterward to also not pay much attention to technique. After all, it's a lot less work, and after a time it became almost a mannerism. So it then became easy to criticize work that was done in a more craftsmanlike way, because it immediately looked like something from the workplace rather than something in the artplace. You know, if it looks well done, it must be commercial, therefore it can't be art."

Acord stopped and patted his pockets. With his left hand, he took out a pack of cigarettes, shook one loose, and pulled it free with his lips just at the moment that his right hand brought up a lighted lighter and touched it to the tip. He took a deep drag and continued talking. "And then, on the other side, if you look around here you see a lot of good technique but not much in the way of new ideas. Even in the best work, there's often something missing." He bowed slightly and held out his arm to introduce me to Little Margaret, the grave marker of a young girl who died a century ago. Little Margaret's lace collar was a dainty web of perforations. The tiny hands on the pocket watch pinned to her dress told the hour of her death. One button of one of her boots had been left undone. Very fancy work. Yet the blankness of her expression suggested not tranquillity and peace but an eternal lack of spirit. And the exquisitely detailed boots appeared to contain two right feet. "I imagine that the guy who did this must have been a simple stone carver with ambitions," Acord said. "Whoever he was, he was good, real good, no doubt about that. But he could have used some help. In the Renaissance, you know, a lot of statues only received five to maybe eight per cent



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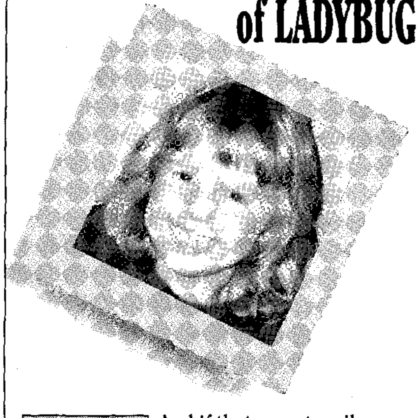

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of their total work time from the hands of the Master himself. But great works were produced. The Master kept a close eye on his people while they were working. Went over and gave them advice, chastised them perhaps sometimes for not being careful enough. He watched, and when the time came, he took over. That doesn't happen anymore. Nowadays, as often as not, the artist just sketches something on a paper napkin, or whips up a model out of coat hangers and modelling clay, and sends it out for construction, leaving the craftsmen to try to figure out what he meant. He doesn't know what needs to be done, he couldn't do it himself, and he may not even see the piece again until it's installed. Now I no longer insist, like I used to, that the true artist must carry out every step himself. But there are, I still believe fervently, parts and portions of every sculpture project that must come to birth under the artist's hand alone, for it to really take on that inner life, that magic that makes a real work of sculpture—one that has the enduring capabilities of bristling the hair on the back of your neck centuries later."

ACORD's second winter in Barre was a long one. The aches in his body each freezing morning brought back vivid memories of old climbing accidents, and the fresh scrapes and bruises from the previous day's carving seemed to sting more sharply than they had before. He no longer found it romantic to chip through the ice on his leftover coffee. And these daily agonies were augmented by greater woes. In December, his cabin back in Index, on which he had been making payments all this time, burned to the ground; he suspected that a careless house sitter had fallen asleep with a cigarette in hand. There was no insurance, of course. Then, in February, Gefion took sick; in March, she went blind; in April, she had to be put down. Acord took her out for a final picnic in the country, and after lunch he dug her grave. Then he slipped from her neck a silver rabbit talisman he had cast for her years before, and shot her through the head with a Colt .41 revolver. One of his women friends planted a box of marigolds on the wooden awning above his studio door, a memorial to Gefion and a hopeful omen for the coming spring—if it ever arrived.

Meanwhile, Acord was quickly going broke. In order to make enough to live, let alone enough to support his own sculpture, he would have to work at Gaylord's full time (or overtime, if the union allowed it). But he knew what that would do to him. He had seen how the granite sapped the strength of his colleagues, and how the production line of kitsch drained their spirits. He knew mechanics and pipe fitters who had more creative spark and more passion for their work than many of the sculptors in Barre.

Acord figured that he had accomplished what he had come for, and there was no real need for him to stay on. He felt that he'd already suffered enough. ("Barre," he said. "Say it twice and it's a disease.") But then, in late winter, he began to hear rumors of a strike. The contracts for both quarriers and cutters were due up in May, and neither group was satisfied with management's proposals. On top of a salary offer lower than the rate of inflation, management was trying to cut back disability benefits and take away some of the union's privileges. The manufacturers of markers also wanted to install new equipment that might eliminate some workers' jobs. Acord was outraged (and secretly delighted). He saw an opportunity to get back at the companies, show up the G.C.I.A., and rekindle the flames of the radicalism of the nineteenth-century immigrants. He volunteered his services to the union, and, to his surprise, he was invited to chair the strike committee. When the membership voted to strike, in early May, Acord got busy.

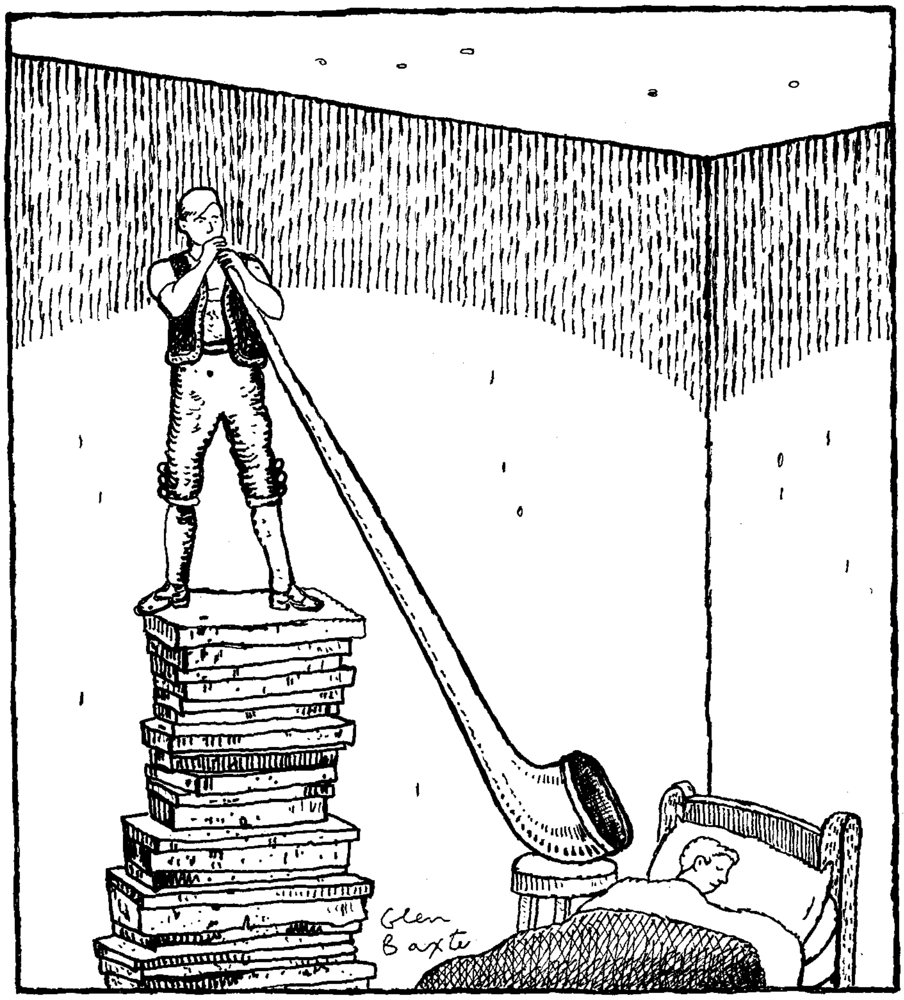
The first order of business was to stop the manufacturers from shipping rough granite out of Barre. "As long as the raw product keeps moving, the manufacturers can keep up with their overhead," Acord explained at the time to a writer from *The Vermont Vanguard Press*. "The job of finishing stone is our legitimate work, and they're trying to get the work done elsewhere. As long as they can move granite, they'll never settle with us." Although the granite haulers were non-union, Acord's picketers were able to persuade most of them, through reasoned argument or force of personality, not to cross the lines. Roving bands of strikers patrolled the town to make sure that no trucks slipped out through the back streets. Strikers were not permitted to carry weapons of any sort, but some of the men stapled their picket signs to baseball bats, until the police reminded them that there were also limits to the permissible dimensions of the sticks.

As head of the strike committee, Acord was carefully watched by Barre's finest. He was arrested along with other picketers for criminal trespass, but the charge was later dismissed. One night, he came home from the picket lines to discover a cruiser in front of his door and a policeman up on his roof, poking through his flower box, in search of marijuana among the marigolds. Finally, after following him one evening from picket line to picket line they nailed him for driving while intoxicated. Keeping up the men's spirits, Acord explained in court, was just part of his job as strike chairman. The judge fined him five hundred dollars and took away his license.

The strike ended after two weeks, when the granite cutters voted to accept a wage-and-benefits package that management had offered months before. The manufacturers also won the right to introduce new machinery, but a cosmetic compromise provided for consultation with the union. Furthermore, management now agreed to renegotiate salary after two years. The strikers' greatest victory, however, was the preservation of the right of the union representative to walk on any shop floor without permission. The union rep himself, Louis Pardlow, contended, "It was a fairly decent strike. Mm-hmm."

Acord would have liked to keep fighting; the drama was cathartic. But when it was over he could at least console himself with the thought that the granite cutters had done better than the air-traffic controllers. In saving union rights, he felt, they had done something to revive the G.C.I.A.'s past and protect its future. The rank and file were sufficiently satisfied with Acord's performance to elect him president of Local 219. His presidency lasted less than six weeks.

Acord had been planning to spend his last months in Barre working on his own projects alone, but the convergence of financial and legal problems changed his mind. He could no longer afford to stay in Barre, and he could barely afford to leave. After his D.W.I. conviction, he resigned as president of Local 219 and posted notices of sales of his worldly goods—his household possessions, his welding equipment, his compressor, and the truck that had brought him to Vermont. The sales covered his debts and bought him a bus ticket to New York. Acord crated up his carving tools and two stones—"Monstrance for a Grey Horse" and the granite half of another work called "Reliquary for Two Hands"—and shipped them collect to himself in Seattle. He left behind a wax positive for the casting of the second reliquary hand, an eight-foot piece of black granite that he had just begun roughing out, and a lot of mixed emotions.



LIFE WITH HANS WAS NOT ALWAYS A BOWL OF CHERRIES.

• •

BACK in Index, on the deck of his friends' house, Acord looked up at the saw-toothed mountain. The shadows in the rills were growing darker and climbing higher. "This might be a good time to go take a look at the falls," he said, pulling himself to his feet. He held his beer bottle to the light once more and then emptied it over the deck railing; a yeasty gray sludge oozed out and dropped down the slope in blobs. "That ought to make the earthworms happy," he remarked. We walked back through the house, out the front door, and into the woods. The river rustled softly on our right, out of sight behind a heavy curtain of evergreen. After a few hundred yards, we came to an old railroad trestle, still in use. As we walked across, Acord looked intently at the silvery rails against the iron-gray ties. "Good use of unlike materials," he commented. Just past the trestle, we followed a dirt road down toward the riverbank. A plank bridge crossed the end of a still pool, where the river backed up behind a wall of granite. We stood on the bridge and watched dragonflies dodging this way and that across the water. Clouds of gnats hovered just above the surface, a golden haze in the setting sun. The falls were still invisible, but the air grew heavy, and we could hear a hissing sound at the far end of the pool. "That's it," Acord said, pointing to a ten-foot gap in the granite wall—the spillway for the reservoir and the head of the falls. We moved on in that direction across a broad table of granite between the reservoir and the slope.

By the standards of Victoria or Niagara, the falls at Index are unspectacular. The riverbed drops just fifty feet in the space of a hundred yards, and eighty feet altogether in the course of a quarter mile. There is no dramatic panorama: on one side, the channel bends along the base of a cliff; on the other, a line of boulders, some left by the river and some brought by man, block the falls from view. For most of the year—except in spring and late autumn, when the water sweeps across the flat and up the sides of the valley—the cascade is confined to this narrow channel. The only way to see it is to climb inside.

As we scrambled over the wall of boulders, the hissing turned into a roar. On the opposite bank, the gray rock rose in great, sweeping curves to a height of eighty feet. "That's the scale I'm after!" Acord shouted. Then he gestured straight across, down closer to the water, where the cascade had chiselled a ten-foot-high frieze of delicately fluted, sharp-edged niches, each about the size and shape of the zygomatic arch on "Monstrance for a Grey Horse." "Good detail work, too."

Two feet below us, the water was tossing and tumbling, churning and frothing, twisting and spouting through the chute. It plunged past faster than the eye could follow, yet the strength of the current and the contours of the channel forced it into shapes that looked frozen in place. But looks deceive: what we were seeing was not quite water but a mousse, six feet deep, whipped up by the rocks. The occasional kayaker foolhardy enough to shoot these rapids loses buoyancy in the foam and gets ground up by the granite and the falls. Someone tries it just about every year, but the result is nearly always fatal.

We squatted on the rocks for a good long time, staring into the maelstrom. The atmosphere was terrifying and seductive. Surrounded by the sound, walled in by the rock, and bathed in the moisture, I felt enveloped by the falls. The water seemed to beckon us to come even closer. I knew how quickly the current would knock me off balance and pull me down, but I was still strongly tempted to test the flow with a hand or a foot. I began to wonder where I could borrow a kayak.

In the slow-fading light of the summer's dusk, the water began to look grayer, harder, colder. My knees started aching, and the mist was giving me a chill. "Time to get back?" Acord suggested. I pulled my gaze up with some difficulty, and again looked across at the far bank, just a few feet away. After half an hour of trying to hold the water steady, my eyes now made the hard rock swirl, and my head and stomach turned with it.

"I couldn't tell anymore what's liquid and what's solid," I said as we walked back along the table toward the bridge.

"*Exactly*," Acord replied. I wasn't telling him anything new. "I mean, you could see them as a single substance, two manifestations of a single force and entity. Because, you know, when you carve granite it's as if it were a frozen river, the way the grain and the structure runs in the stone. And when you look down into a quarry you can see the granite as it *flowed*, because in fact it did flow. For that matter, you can see it right here." He ran his hand along a striated outcropping. "Remember, granite is an igneous rock, and in its molten state it really was a liquid," he continued. "So the waterlike nature of the granite deposited it with a water pattern. Then it set up and became the surface of the planet. A lot later by our standards of time, but intermediate in the life of the granite, perhaps, it was exposed to real water, running water—like a river running, running through it, raindrops falling on it. The force of the water responds to the already existent pattern of fluidness in the stone, but the water sculpts the granite at the same time."

"Doesn't that mean that the water will eventually dissolve your sculpture, too?"

"Well, yeah, but not before the sculpture's done its job. I'm designing my work for thirty thousand years, but it'll probably last longer than that. I mean, it's taken Nature maybe a billion years to get these mountains in the

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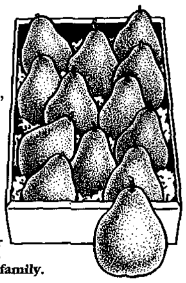

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shape they're in. Don't get me wrong—she's done a nice job, a real nice job. But it's slow work, and, all things considered, the granite's holding up pretty well. Besides, it's mostly not a *dissolving* process. It's ablation. My sculpture will be subject to lots of destructive forces, no doubt, but I'm not planning on setting it up in the middle of a river."

Acord crouched down over a hole in the rock about the size and shape of an espresso cup. Around us I could see similar holes, anywhere from a shot glass to a highball in diameter, and all of them filled with water. The edges were as clean and smooth as if bored by a diamond bit. "During the spring, the river spreads out across this whole table, and these holes are like eddies in the current. The water is carrying little particles of granite. You can see 'em down in the bottom of the hole—grains of dust and small pebbles that bump into the solid mass and slowly wear it away. Then, in the winter, these little pools freeze up, and if they're along a fault the expansion might shear away some of the rock, and you get that fluted effect." He dug his finger deep in the hole and fished out a pebble the size of a pea. "Yeah, it's self-carving stuff," he said, rolling the pebble in his hand. "If our lifetimes were a lot longer, I might have been a shoe salesman, or something. I wouldn't have had to do what I'm doing. But we can't wait millions of years, you know, and I can speed the process up so much."

IN January of 1986, five years after he left Barre, Acord finally finished carving the head and column of "Monstrance," and he turned his attention to a search for high-level radioactive waste. He briefly contemplated extracting uranium from his own granite waste. The uranium was in there, in amounts of between ten and twenty-five parts per million, and Acord knew how to get it out: he had long ago learned the alchemical techniques used by the German chemist Heinrich Klaproth, who first described the element, in 1789. But to get the amount of uranium he needed he would first have to crush about three million pounds of granite, and that was more than he thought he could handle with his stone-carver's hammer. All he wanted was thirty-three pounds—roughly enough for a small nuclear device. Acord planned to separate the uranium into two subcritical masses securely isolated from one another; once sealed in the core of the sculpture, the fissile material would pose no threat to the environment. Even with his careful planning and skilled execution, however, he was fairly certain that no one would let him have a decommissioned warhead—at least, not right away.

Spent reactor fuel, on the other hand, seemed like a good compromise. "I kept hearing that everybody was trying to get rid of the stuff, you know, and I thought I'd help them out," Acord explained to me. "Additionally, there was a real appeal to spent fuel. I mean, here was this uranium that had been wrestled from the ground, its nuclear powers extracted, now totally amixed and cojoined with plutonium and other materials. That's a tremendous challenge to me as an artist. I'd be working with these extremely difficult, highly toxic, man-made elements, whose essence is so dramatically altered by

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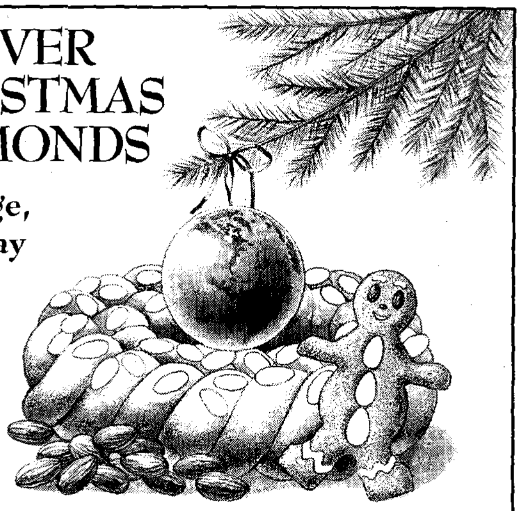

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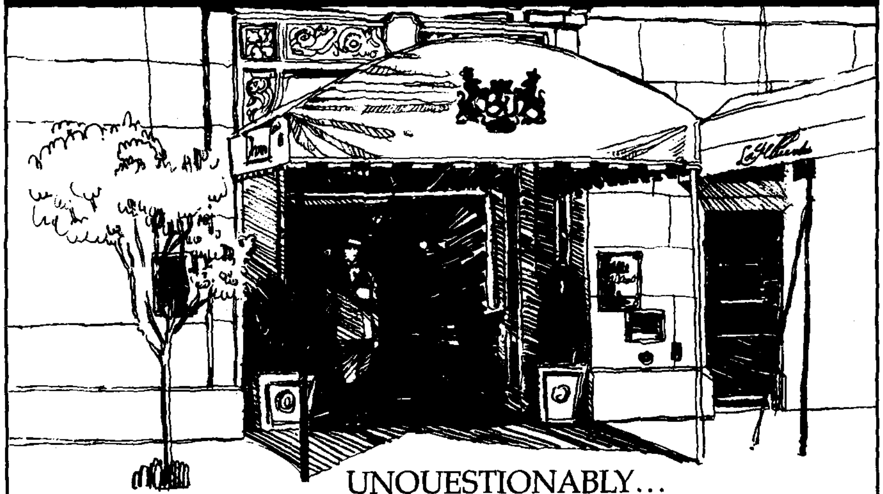

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shape alone. It was just too appropriate for words. After all, sculpture's so uniquely human. It also seemed like a creative solution to the existing bottleneck in the marketplace—the lack of money for sculpture. For one thing, we're talking about *used materials.* I mean—wow!—I'd finally found a way to get back in the mainstream of modern art. But the punch line is that *this* scrap is hazardous, so instead of trying to keep the price down I can use the very best of processes and materials, because no one would want this to be unsafely contained. It would give me a legitimate reason to do good work. So, in any event, I called the Trojan Nuclear Power Plant"—in northwest Oregon—"and asked them if they had some spent fuel. I said I didn't need very much, I was gonna just use it in a sculpture project, and if they wanted to give me an old fuel assembly, I'd be happy to drive down in my pickup and pick it up." Acord looked quizzically at an imaginary telephone clenched in his left hand. "On that call I think the line went dead."

Over the next few months, Acord placed dozens of telephone calls with similar results. When he wasn't left on hold, he was told that the person he wanted was out of the office. When he finally made contact, he was referred to a different division, department, agency, office, or bureau. In the end, the answer was always the same: to read the regulations and forget about the project. Finally, however, he got lucky. Nancy Kirner, then a health physicist at the Office of Radiation Control in the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, referred Acord to Michael O'Brien, the radiation-safety officer in the Department of Environmental Health and Safety at the University of Washington. After some initial reluctance, O'Brien, in turn, provided Acord with a list of so-called exempt materials—commercial products that contained radioactive substances but were available to the public without regulation. On the list were lantern mantles (thorium), hearing-aid batteries (tritium), and a variety of substances, including heavy water, that were sold by chemical-supply houses. Of all the exempt materials, one in particular caught his eye: uranium-glazed Fiesta ware.

—PHILIP SCHUYLER

(*This is the first part of a two-part article.*)

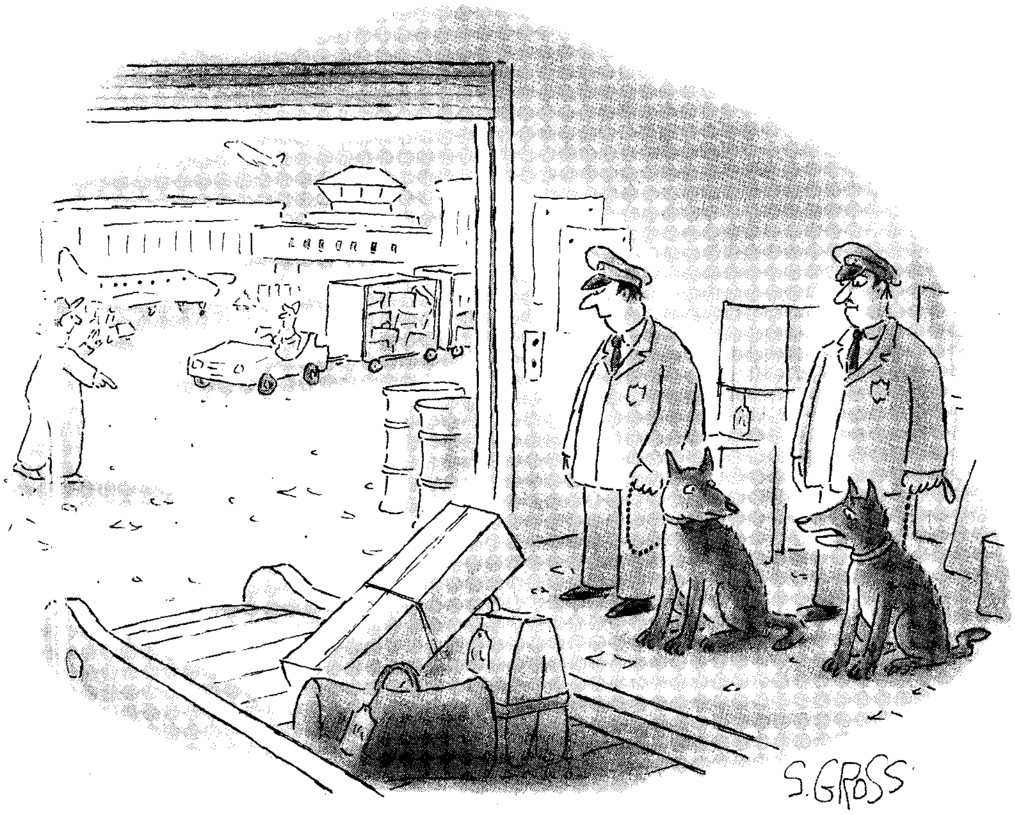
JAZZ

Wynton Looks Back

TUESDAY, August 6th: The fifth annual Classical Jazz Festival, sponsored by Lincoln Center and held in Alice Tully Hall, began tonight. (Lincoln Center has suddenly embraced jazz. In addition to Classical Jazz it will offer twenty-one concerts, lectures, and film programs during the next nine months.) The concert called “At the Court of King Oliver,” was a celebration of the great New Orleans cornettist and bandleader, whose Creole Jazz Band was the first consummate jazz band to make records. It worked in Chicago between 1922 and 1924, and included at its height King Oliver on first cornet, Louis Armstrong on second cornet, Johnny Dodds on clarinet, Honoré Dutrey on trombone, Lil Hardin on piano, Bill Johnson on bass, and Baby Dodds on drums. The twenty-nine-year-old virtuoso trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, who is the director of the festival and is scheduled to play at all the concerts this week, appeared with a band made up from his own working group—Nicholas Payton and Greg Stafford on cornets, Fred Lonzo on trombone and slide whistle, Michael White (the evening's director) on clarinet, Farid Barron on piano, Don Vappie on banjo, Wycliffe Gordon on tuba and string bass, and Herlin Riley on drums. (All but Barron and Gordon are, like Marsalis, from New Orleans.) The band played sixteen Creole Jazz Band numbers as well as two numbers by a 1926 Oliver band, two duets Oliver recorded in 1924 with Jelly Roll Morton, and two blues songs on which he had been an accompanist. (Thais Clarke sang.)

The Creole Jazz Band and Jelly Roll Morton's 1926 Red Hot Peppers were the last of the masterly New Orleans ensemble bands—they were, in fact, out of date by the time they made their records. The first jazz soloists—Armstrong working on his own, Sidney Bechet, Coleman Hawkins—were coming forward and would convert jazz into a soloists' music by 1930. The Creole Jazz Band played rags and blues and novelty songs. Its ensembles were partly arranged and partly jammed. It used a lot of two-bar breaks, some of them played in tricky duets by Oliver and Armstrong, and there were occasional short solos. This description of the Oliver band is, of course, based on its recordings, which give little indication of what the band was like in its natural habitat, the dance hall. Because of the limitations of acoustic recording, the musicians sound like tin soldiers playing tin drums. And they had to fit themselves into the three-minute-plus length of the ten-inch 78-r.p.m. record. As a result, they stuck mainly to ensemble playing, in which mistakes would sink quickly to the bottom. (The Oliver-Armstrong duets had probably been memorized by then.) People who heard the band live in Chicago say that it was loose and freewheeling, with ample solo space for all. These listeners also mention the precision and power and swing of Oliver's playing—things that are only hinted at in the recordings. The pianist Jess Stacy remembered hearing the band at the Plantation Café: “The first time I ever went to hear Oliver, he was playing ‘Ukulele Lady,’ and he was playing the fool out of it, and he took five or six choruses in a row. He played sitting down, and he didn't play loud. He knew his instrument. He wasn't spearing for high notes; he stayed right in the middle register. His chord changes were pretty and his vibrato just right—none of that Italian belly vibrato. You could hear that both Louis and Bix had learned from him. In fact, Bix was nuts about him, and one of the things he liked was that Oliver played open horn a lot.”

The Marsalis band pretty much followed the recordings, allowing the musicians to burst forth just once—near the end of the evening, in a raggedy, pushing “Dippermouth Blues.” But, in the best repertory fashion, it somehow imagined how the Creole Jazz Band played in a club, and went at the music with great energy and lift. It made this intricate music *roll*. There were rough edges. Fred Lonzo's slide-whistle solos in “Sobbin' Blues” and “Buddy's Habit” were flat (the eerie, elegant originals, unusually clear in the recordings, were played by either Armstrong or Baby Dodds), and Marsalis, flexing his famous technique, was overly decorative on Oliver's time-



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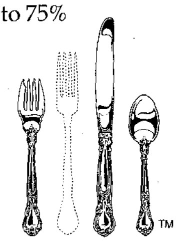

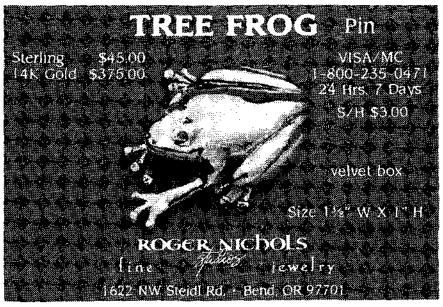
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less three-chorus solo in "Dippermouth." And Marsalis and Michael White forgot that the Creole Jazz Band was primarily a dance band, and that good dance bands use a lot of dynamics. The Marsalis band played at one ringing volume, which would have dismayed Baby Dodds. "The Oliver band played for the comfort of the people," he told Larry Gara in "The Baby Dodds Story." "Not so they couldn't hear, or so they had to put their fingers in their ears. . . . Sometimes the band played so softly you could hardly hear it. . . . We played so soft that you could hear the people's feet dancing." And Herlin Riley, Marsalis's drummer, should have studied Dodds' oceanic press rolls. His own barely lapped at the shore.

WEDNESDAY: None of these jazz singers appeared in "Two Divas of Jazz" tonight—Carol Woods, Roberta Flack, Helen Merrill, Barbara Lea, Carol Sloane, Betty Carter, Jackie Cain, Susannah McCorkle, Marlene VerPlanck, Sylvia Syms, Nancy Marano, Meredith D'Ambrosio, and Nancy Harrow. Instead, Shirley Horn, a cabaret singer and pianist, and Abbey Lincoln, a kind of pop singer, were chosen. Horn, a soft-voiced inward singer who fills small rooms easily, seemed in a concert hall to be wearing a hat that was too big for her. Her first five songs—Irving Berlin's "I Like It"; a blues; "Soothe Me," a song June Christy sang with Stan Kenton; Isham Jones' "It Had to Be You"; and the thirties ballad "Foolin' Myself"—were done with Wynton Marsalis, the harmonica player Toots Thielmans, and the tenor saxophonists Branford Marsalis and Buck Hill. Thielmans was lightsome and darting, and Horn's accompaniments on piano matched and sometimes surpassed the soloists. She is a flawless miniaturist, but she made one mistake: singing "Foolin' Myself." Billie Holiday has owned that song lock, stock, and barrel since she first sang it, in 1937.

Abbey Lincoln, accompanied by Cedar Walton on piano, David Williams on bass, and Billy Higgins on drums, did nine songs. Among them were a mawkish glimpse of Duke Ellington in Heaven, by Walton; "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?"; "How High the Moon"; a Thad Jones song; and "Blue Monk"—unbelievably, fitted out with lyrics. Lincoln kept doing look-at-me things. She walked back and forth in front of her accompanists when they soloed, flashed quick smiles at the audience, and slumped onto a stool and looked morose. Perhaps she was searching for her articulation, her phrasing, her sense of time, even her voice. The alto saxophonist Jackie McLean and Marsalis provided obbligatos and solos. McLean was out of tune, and Marsalis, possibly sensing the slough onstage, was bravura.

THURSDAY: Jazz is in a retrospective stage, but certain styles are gone forever. One is the blue, windblown music of Kansas City, best exemplified by the Basie band of the thirties and early forties. Recordings exist, and a few of the original Basie monoliths are still standing, among them Buddy Tate, Harry Edison, and Buck Clayton—the last no longer as a player but as a composer and arranger, who has transmuted his lyrical trumpet playing into his songs and orchestrations. But the heart and soul of the band, the famous All-American rhythm section—Basie, Freddie Green on guitar, Walter Page on bass, Jo Jones on drums—has departed, and none of its imitators can manage more than an inexact mirror image of that magic foursome. It made rhythm out of air, sliding under Lester Young and Dicky Wells and Clayton and lifting them skyward, and it presided over the Basie band's complex and delicate system of checks and balances. The muted Clayton piped beautifully in the distance, while the open-horn Edison came right at you; Young's pale-moon tone balanced Herschel Evans' earthbound sound; Basie was aphoristic, his soloists eloquent.

Tonight's program, "Kansas City Swing and Shout," was like a lithograph of a painting: the right shapes and colors were there, but there was no texture or depth or feeling. What might be thought of as the detritus of Kansas City music took up the first part of the concert. Claude (Fiddler) Williams, who was Basie's guitarist briefly in the late thirties, played six numbers on the violin with Ted Dunbar on guitar and Aaron Bell on bass, and demonstrated that his arabesques are not always in tune. Then the pianist Jay McShann, backed by Bell and

Oliver Jackson on drums, did "Willow Weep for Me" and four blues, one of which he sang in his thin, bare voice. "Willow" started slow and down, as it should, but ended in a jarring jump tempo. McShann is a surprisingly adroit player harmonically, but his improvisations have long been set in stone.

There was some momentum in the second half of the evening. The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra—fifteen strong and including Wynton Marsalis; Britt Woodman on trombone; Norris Turney, Joe Temperley, Charles McPherson, Frank Wess, and Todd Williams on reeds; Roland Hanna on piano; and Kenny Washington on drums—played five Basie numbers, two Bennie Motens, an Andy Kirk, a Harlan Leonard, and two Jay McShanns. The tempos, set by David Berger, who conducted and had made the transcriptions from the original recordings, were just right, and Williams and Wess provided uncanny simulations of Herschel Evans and Lester Young. But the soloists were never allowed to stretch out, even in the infinitely expandable "One O'Clock Jump." Scholarly shadow play prevailed.

FRIDAY: Ten or fifteen years ago, George Wein began filling his New York festival with "tribute" concerts. Some celebrated the living, but most honored the dead, and tended to be sentimental, unfocussed, and overlong. They generally included a narrator who might offer an elegy; film clips; recordings (often the unintended high point of the evening); and live music, frequently by musicians who had worked with the departed. Tonight, Marsalis honored the tenor saxophonist John Coltrane in a program called "Coltrane Serenade," and did it with taste and dispatch. Coltrane died suddenly, at the age of forty, in 1967. Originally influenced by Coleman Hawkins and Charlie Parker, he became as influential as either of them. He also became, because of the sheer passionate weight of his improvisations, a mythic figure. This evening, eleven small groups performed sixteen Coltrane compositions in a manner that would have pleased the powerful, disturbing player. In the first half, nine numbers were played by various combinations of Wynton Marsalis, Wes Anderson on alto saxophone, Todd Williams, and Charles McPherson, all of them backed by the superlative rhythm section of Marcus Roberts on piano, Christian McBride on bass, and Billy Higgins on drums. Roberts, who is blind, is in his twenties, and was classically trained. He suggests Cecil Taylor put through a Mouli grinder. He has Taylor's thunder touch and, like Taylor, often ends his solos with cloud banks of chords. But he starts them with single-note lines made up of dazzling, spiky runs and oddly placed notes. Taylor swings intellectually; Roberts jumps and rocks. Anderson, who is also in his twenties, looks something like Pete Brown (three hundred pounds) and sounds like Pete Brown (concise, swinging) with Charlie Parker icing. Williams, who caught Herschel Evans so well last night, turns out to be a fervent Coltrane admirer. He delivered a moving version of "Alabama," a Coltrane mood piece that recalls, in its density and dark overtones, Billie Holiday's "Strange Fruit." The longest number was the brilliant "Dahomey Dance." All the horns were present, and McBride, who is eighteen, was joined by another stripling bassist, Reginald Veal. Williams did his Coltrane, Marsalis got off some Harry James "Flight of the Bumblebee" passages, and Roberts rose up behind Anderson at the end of his solo like the moon coming over the mountain. Then the bassists soloed together, the one playing background notes and the other soloing mightily in the fashionable big-bamboo way.

The second half of the concert was altogether different. With the exception of McBride, who stayed put, youth was replaced by old Coltrane hands or by Coltrane's immediate descendants—the pianist McCoy Tyner, the drummer Roy Haynes, and the reedmen Joe Henderson and John Stubblefield. The volume went up, and solos stretched to the horizon. Tyner, who has been as influential as Coltrane, is an opaque, many-layered pianist who loves the loud pedal, and Henderson is a fluent, full-toned hard-bop tenor saxophonist who only occasionally looses a Coltrane shriek. Stubblefield played bass clarinet, and got off some deep-throated beauties in his final chorus of "India." Over the years, Haynes, one of the early chattering bebop drummers, has grown louder and louder; a couple of his rim shots all but stopped the music. Marsalis reappeared for "Tran-

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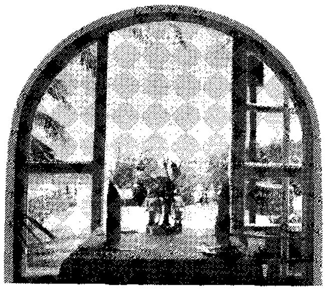

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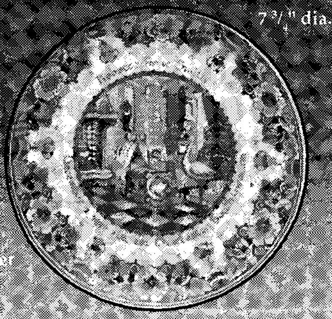

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sition," and did more Harry James, coloring it with the dirty tone James used when he wanted his listeners to know he could play jazz trumpet.

SATURDAY: Duke Ellington liked to compose musical portraits of people he admired. They were not programmatic, but rhythmic and coloristic approximations; they went after flairs and accents and glints. Many of the best were done in the late thirties and early forties. Tonight, we were offered "Portraits by Ellington," played by the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra (eighteen strong this time, plus five guests). We heard Ellington's graceful 1928 "Black Beauty," a portrait of the singer Florence Mills (Ellington's various versions never matched the stark elegance of the recording made in the mid-forties by the trumpeter Joe Thomas); his great 1939-40 portraits of the pianist Willie the Lion Smith, the dancer Bill Robinson, the comedian Bert Williams, and a Harlem character called Jack the Bear; and his 1970 "New Orleans Suite," which celebrates Louis Armstrong, Sidney Bechet, the bassist Wellman Braud, and Mahalia Jackson. Also included were the "Liberian Suite," a series of five jangling, cheerful dances, written in 1947; a four-part "Portrait of Ella Fitzgerald," written a decade later, and notable for a long and exquisite trumpet solo by Emory Thompson and for a perfumed Ellington narration delivered by the singer Milt Grayson; and an inconclusive "Self-Portrait of the Bean," which Coleman Hawkins recorded with Ellington in the sixties. Dave Berger again did the transcriptions (particularly difficult with Ellington, who continually crossbred instruments in his arrangements) and again conducted with considerable verve.

The "New Orleans Suite," forty minutes long, took up most of the second half of the evening. For some reason, Berger had rearranged the suite's nine sections (sidestepping the evening's program, which follows the 1970 Atlantic recordings) so that the suite ended with the mechanical, riff-filled "Second Line" instead of with the "Portrait of Mahalia Jackson." Ellington, a master of perversity, made his Jackson portrait a sixteen-bar blues, a form that the great gospel singer had said she would never sing in public. (She is said to have sung the blues in private one evening at the Lenox School of Music in 1960.) Two days before the Jackson section was recorded, Johnny Hodges, Ellington's empyrean alto saxophonist, died, and the number turned into a double dirge. It consists of seven choruses. Four are played by solo flute over a melody carried by three clarinets, a tenor saxophone, and a bass clarinet; and three are played by a muted wah-wah trumpet, a tenor saxophone, and a wah-wah trombone, over a melody carried by reeds and trumpets. The piece moves at a stately walk, and is full of murmurs and asides and undertones. And it is full of pathos, a rare emotion in Ellington's music. (He considered sorrow a private matter.) "Portrait of Mahalia Jackson" belongs with his classic tone poems—"Mood Indigo," "The Mooche," "Blue Serge," and "Black and Tan Fantasy." The band played throughout the evening with a looseness and eloquence and occasional swagger that recalled the Ellington band at its most telling—when, on a long engagement somewhere, it didn't have to think about anything except music and that week's paycheck.

Wynton Marsalis has become a conservator in his Classical Jazz festivals. Bob Wilber, the clarinettist, alto saxophonist, and jazz scholar, once said, "All the museum work, the musical anthropology, that has been practiced in jazz has been done by middle-class whites. Why? Whites have gone back and exposed the roots of what began as a black music, while black musicians have almost exclusively practiced the cult of the hip. We have been the conservatives and they have been the revolutionaries." Ten years ago, most young black musicians had never heard King Oliver and Louis Armstrong; their sense of the history of jazz began with the Miles Davis of the early sixties. But Marsalis, solidly grounded in the past by his father, the pianist Ellis Marsalis, is attempting to teach a new generation of black musicians where they came from.

He's doing it in a disquieting way, though. It appears that he is reviving not only the older music but also the reverse racism popular among black musicians in the fifties and sixties. Just six of the fifty-four performers used this week at Lincoln Center were white. Blacks invented jazz, but nobody owns it.

—WHITNEY BALLIETT

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THE THEATRE

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THE Young Playwrights Festival, at Playwrights Horizons, always a festive occasion, seems more so than ever this year—its tenth anniversary—not, heaven knows, because the scripts are more cheerful but because in each instance the writer's touch is sure and the performances are exactly right. There are hints throughout of exposure—perhaps overexposure—to television or to movie thrillers or to page 1 of the *Post*, but much is fresh and sharply observed. Denise Maher's "Secrets to Square Dancing" was submitted when Miss Maher was seventeen, and it was done at another playwrights festival, in New Jersey, when she was only sixteen. The play is about a schoolboy all of whose marks are satisfactory but who doesn't do well on standardized tests. He is grabbed by what appear to be two government agents—black briefcases, black glasses, black hats—and while his mother is forced to take part in a kind of group-counselling session, he has to submit to even more standardized tests before finally being released. The group scene is very emotional and funny. Louis Falk is the boy; Anne Lange is the mother; Gloria Muzio directed. Don't ask me what the title means.

In Matthew Peterson's "Donut World," another comedy submitted when the author was seventeen, an enormous, pompous fellow sits in the middle of an enormous table shaped like a hollow square and plays with tiny toy train cars, which he insists upon calling a miniature railroad. He bosses around both his wife and a man who comes to call, and demands store-bought doughnuts. The wife brings in a box of them, and the guest holds up a pair, thumbs through the holes. The action is minimal, in other words—a kind of theatrical fooling around—but the incidental stage business is comical, as enacted by Paul Bates, as the railroad buff, and Olga Merediz, as his fussy, busy little wife. Michael Mayer directed.

"Man at His Best," by Carlotta Zimmerman, is about a murderer and a hustler who share a prison cell and play Pinterish cat-and-mouse games (and indulge in a little too much tell-me-about-yourself dialogue) as they scramble up and down the bars of their cage like a pair of monkeys. Miss Zimmerman has more than monkey business in mind, though, and the mood of menace that prevails proves in the end to be entirely justified. Seth Gilliam is hustler; James G. Macdonald is murderer; and, under Mark Brokaw's direction, both are all that one could ask.

The three plays that I've described are certainly promising. "I'm Not Stupid," by David E. Rodriguez, is a promise kept. He is already in the right profession. In an atmosphere that is almost tangibly threatening, he tells the story of a rather backward little boy and his sadistic mother, each of whom repeats the title over and over, and of a doctor—a psychiatrist, probably—who wants to help both of them but cannot avert disaster. No beginner, Mr. Rodriguez, a freshman at N.Y.U.'s Tisch School of the Arts, has already written several plays that have been produced, and this one could be just another stop on a soaring career. The performance, under Seret Scott's direction, is in every way worthy of the script. Curtis McClarin is the boy, and Peter Francis James is the self-thwarted doctor. S. Epatha Merkerson, as the mother, gives, as usual, a truly distinguished performance. (What's so sacred, by the way, about that clumsy "S" on a name that might someday become a household word?) —EDITH OLIVER

•

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Lionel, the Ph.D. chemist advancing in his career at PPG Industries, and Joyce, with only her high school education, had watched their marriage slowly fall to pieces, like a thunderstorm that gathers bit by bit on a distant horizon, at first issuing low rumbles of noise, but accelerating and growing until flashes of lightning and booming thunder envelop everything in the storm's path. —"*The Milwaukee Murders,*" *by Don Davis.*

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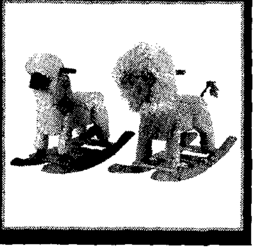

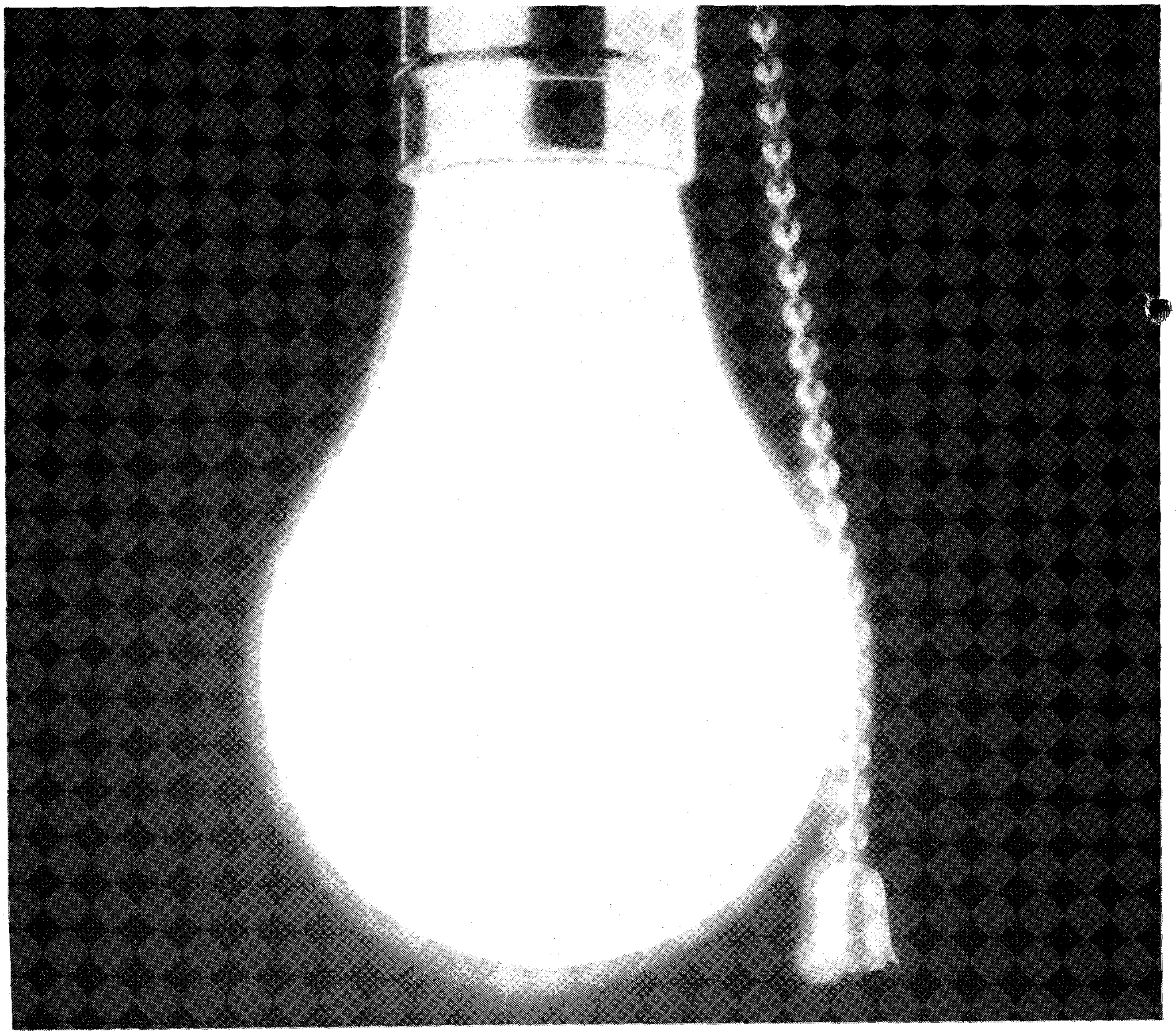

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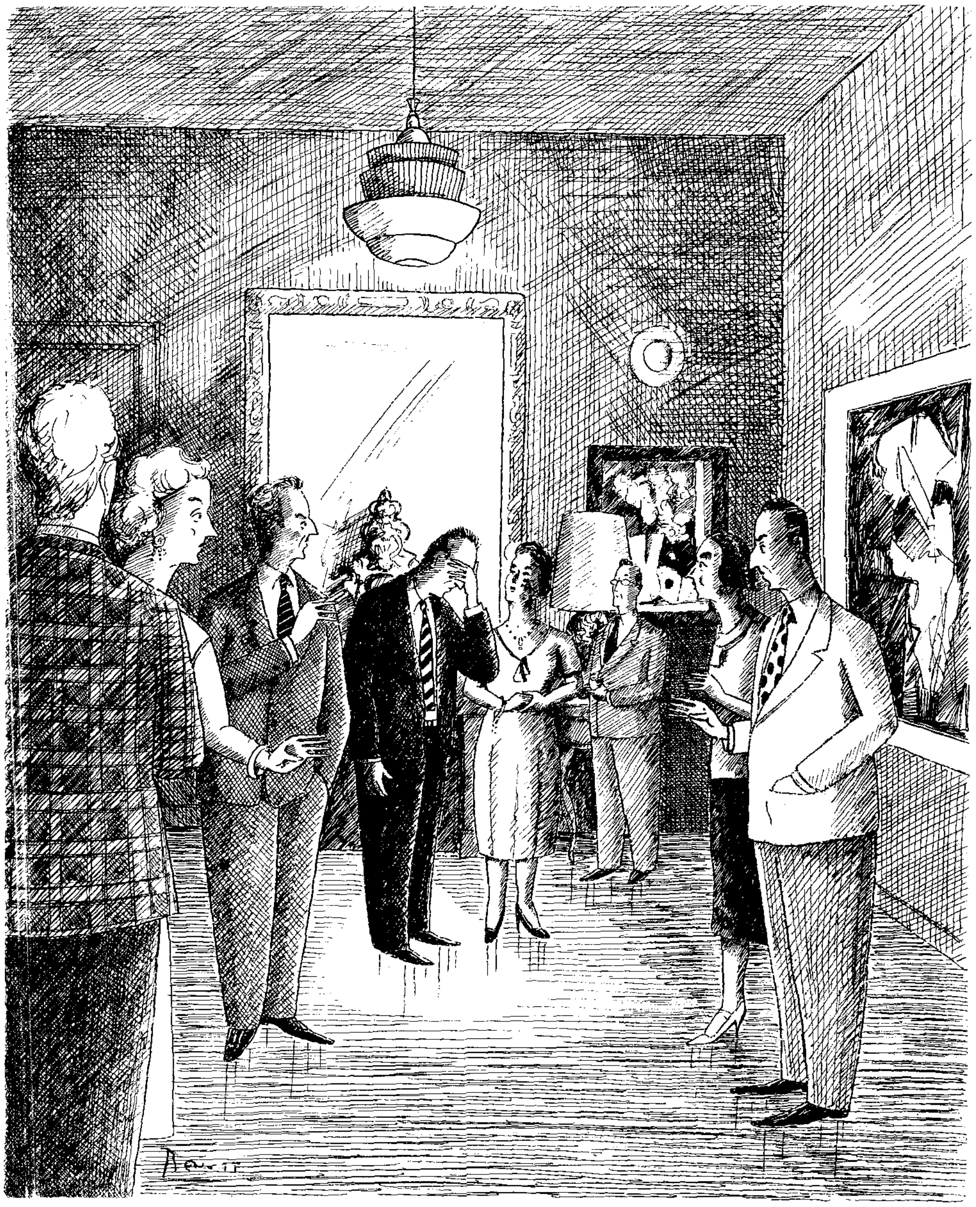
LETTER FROM TOKYO

TAKING a train out to Niigata Prefecture, a hundred and twenty-five miles northwest of Tokyo, provides a welcome relief from the city's late-summer smog, which this year seemed headed for record density. As you climb into the mountains, and cramped houses and factories give way to terrace upon terrace of fields of ripening rice, the temperature, it seems, drops lower at each village. Spending a few days in the country also offers a temporary respite from the palpable anxiety that is currently consuming the capital. Since mid-June, when improper dealings of some major brokerages and corporations first came to light, Tokyoites have been stunned by one financial scandal after another. Tokyo is full of commotion, yet there is a pervasive sense that once all the publicity concerning corruption among brokers, bankers, politicians, and bureaucrats has subsided, nothing will change. Out in the prefectures, farmers and townspeople are calmer, but they worry that their way of life, at the center of which is rice, is about to be fundamentally altered. It isn't scandal that lends conversations with Japanese farmers an edge of apprehension but fear that the rules that have allowed them to prosper more than any other segment of postwar society are about to be knocked out from under them.

Rice is a controlled commodity in Japan. The government regulates the amount of land devoted to the cultivation of rice, and oversees the distribution of it in designated stores. A vast agricultural coöperative called Nokyo provides farmers with seeds, fertilizer, machinery, and credit, and controls most of the ten and a half million tons of rice that Japanese farmers produce each year. Most important, the government blocks almost all importation of rice grown elsewhere, and sets the domestic price by paying farmers at artificially high levels while subsidizing consumers. It's an old system, dating back to 1942, and since the mid-eighties Tokyo has found it an expensive one, because maintaining high price supports has become a disproportionately large item in the national budget. At the same time, barring foreign-grown rice has become an increasingly troublesome trade issue.

The *beika*, or price paid to the rice producers, is set by a government council each summer, and it has become a reliable measure of the political confidence felt by the governing Liberal Democratic Party. A sharp cut in the *beika* suggests that the mood in the Party is optimistic and its elected members see no special need to cater to the farmers, their traditional power base. A stable price, by the same token, is taken to mean that the Party is subject to political fears. In 1987, the *beika* dropped for the first time in thirty-one years, coming down 5.9 per cent, and it dipped an additional 4.6 per cent in 1988. Those years covered the final months of Yasuhiro Nakasone's lengthy term as Prime Minister and the beginning of Noboru Takeshita's term, when the L.D.P.'s popularity was near its all-time high. Then came the Recruit scandal, an exposé of influence-peddling, which upset the political balance in 1989 and 1990. At first, there was no change in the *beika;* then, last year, after much deliberation, it was cut, but by only 1.5 per cent. This fall, when the new crop is ready, the government will pay an average of 16,392 yen, or about a hundred and twenty dollars, for a sixty-kilogram bag of rice—a figure that represents a drop of only 0.65 per cent from last year's. Most of the current crop of scandals were still in



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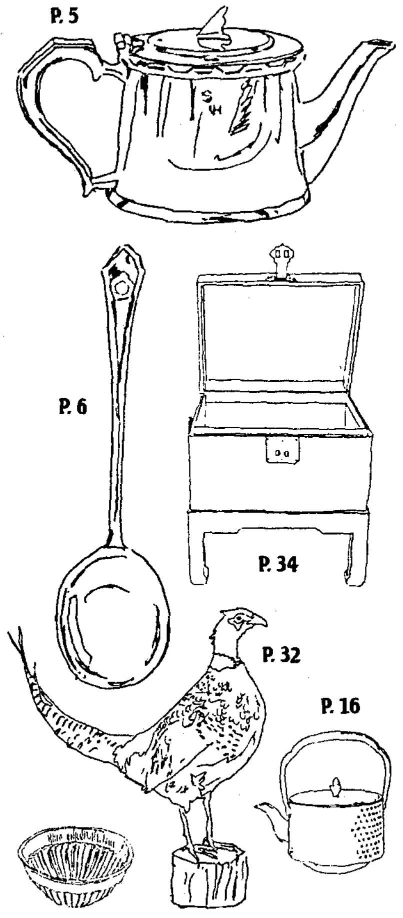

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the future when the new *beika* was announced, on July 4th. Through the spring, most commentators say, the L.D.P. had sought a price cut of as much as 3.5 per cent in its negotiations with Nokyo and the Agriculture Ministry, and the decision to pull back from that represented an act of mercy. The underlying message seems to be that worse is to come. And the real issue now isn't so much what the future *beika* will be as whether the L.D.P. will soon have to renege on one of its most often repeated campaign promises—that "not a single grain" of foreign-grown rice will ever be allowed into Japan.

There could be no clearer example of the two kinds of truth by which the Japanese live. The *tatemae*—the spoken truth—is that the price of rice is determined each year by a formula that attempts to equalize agricultural and industrial wages, including the cost of production, and that imports will never be permitted to disrupt this arrangement. The *honne*—the never-mentioned reality—is that the *beika* is what Reizo Utagawa, a retired journalist, calls "a political price," which has nothing to do with formulas, and that imports are probably inevitable. Utagawa, who is in his late fifties, began his career covering the Agriculture Ministry. He was in Washington in 1971, when the Rice Millers' Association, an American trade group, raised the question of Japan's import ban for what he believes was the first time. "After twenty years, what's happening now is hardly a shock," Utagawa said when I saw him recently. "Farmers understand that the cause is more or less lost. But it's considered noble in Japan to fight to the end. The marginal cut in price this year was mostly a matter of saving face for Nokyo, and that became an important issue because Nokyo still has considerable power. In the Party, they said, 'The system's changing anyway. Let's let them have their way.' In the old days, when one civil war followed another, there was what is known as the banzai attack: when the castle was just about to fall, those inside attacked with full force. Think of the kamikaze missions during the last war. The L.D.P. has no sympathy left for farmers, but it wanted to prevent Nokyo from staging such an attack."

If easing tension in the farming constituency was the Party's aim, its generosity this year can be counted only a partial success. Every spring, the farm lobby—Nokyo; the Agriculture Ministry; and, in the Diet, the *zoku*, or "tribe," concerned with farm issues—mounts an active campaign in anticipation of the *beika* negotiations, both within the government and publicly. The most visible manifestations of this effort are sound trucks that cruise Tokyo blaring the message from the countryside and then park for days in Kasumigaseki, the administrative district. This year, the farmers and their bureaucratic supporters outdid themselves. In March, middle-level officials forced an American trade group to remove a few bags of rice from an international food fair that was being held in Chiba, a prefecture bordering Tokyo. Samples or not, the officials said, the sacks contained illegally imported rice. For most Japanese, this was a demonstration of xenophobia, which became all the more embarrassing when it made front-page news in the Washington *Post* and other overseas newspapers. Undaunted, Nokyo sponsored an Emergency National Rally for the Protection of Rice on July 1st, three days before the *beika* was announced. The rally, held at the Tokyo Dome, a large modern baseball stadium, became an occasion for vociferous jeering against foreigners and against the direction of L.D.P. policy. Fifty thousand farmers and their supporters attended. The battle may be lost, as Utagawa believes, but no one is falling on his sword just yet.

SHIGERU IIZUKA and his older brother, Yasumasa, did not attend the rally at the Tokyo Dome. But they are as deeply concerned as anyone else in Niigata about the future of national farm policies. The Iizukas work a thirty-six-acre farm, in the town of Yamatomachi, that they took over from their father many years ago, and they have produced watermelons as well as rice since the late sixties, when national rice production shifted from deficit to surplus and the government began telling farmers to change to other crops. Not all the humility for which Japanese farmers are known could hide Shigeru's pride in the melon he served when I visited him. A good melon, judged here by its roundness, color, and size (the ideal Japanese watermelon is slightly bigger than a large American cantaloupe), is worth two or three thousand yen—fifteen or twenty dollars—when it's wrapped and sold as a *gifto* in a Tokyo market. Melons and *nae*—rice seedlings, which the Iizukas sell to other farmers—take up less of the Iizukas' land than rice, but they are financial lifesavers. Last year, the brothers earned twenty-three million yen from fruit and *nae*, and fourteen million yen from rice. Nevertheless, it is rice that gives the Iizukas their sense of security, which is as evident as their pride, and that is so only partly because they have a guaranteed market at a price that can be roughly predicted, even if it is gradually declining. "Rice doesn't earn as much as other crops, but production is stable in this part of the country," Shigeru said as we spoke across a scarred wooden desk in a plywood shed that he uses as an office. "Fruits and vegetables aren't. They can be heavily affected by the weather. This year, about fifteen per cent of the land devoted to melons in Yamatomachi has been damaged by too much rainfall."

Shigeru Iizuka's argument is probably the simplest one advanced in favor of the current arrangements under which Japanese farmers grow rice. There are many other arguments. As far back in Japan's past as it is possible to go, rice has been part of the story. In ancient times, Japan was known as *Mizuho no kuni*—"the land of abundant rice"—and the crop is still closely identified with imperial rituals said to be some twenty-six centuries old. During the feudal age, the amount of rice a daimyo's peasants produced was the accepted standard by which his power and wealth were measured, and rice stipends held by samurai warriors were tradable in a kind of futures market. In 1878, a decade after the Meiji Restoration marked the beginning of the modern era, stock exchanges in Tokyo and Osaka were operating on the principles that brokers had followed for centuries in buying and selling rice. The origins of Japan's rice-control laws lie in riots that took place in 1918, when rice traders, in alliance with landlords, cornered the retail market. The law as it stands today was written after the Second World War, when scarcity posed a threat of starvation and instability.

What Masamitsu Inoue worries about is community and land. To him, *inasaku* means much more than its literal translation, which is simply "rice production." Inoue, a town official in

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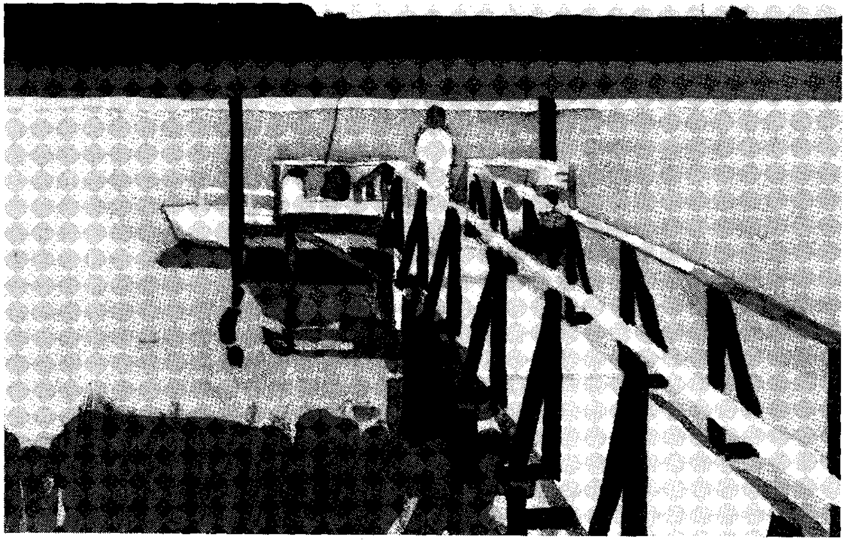

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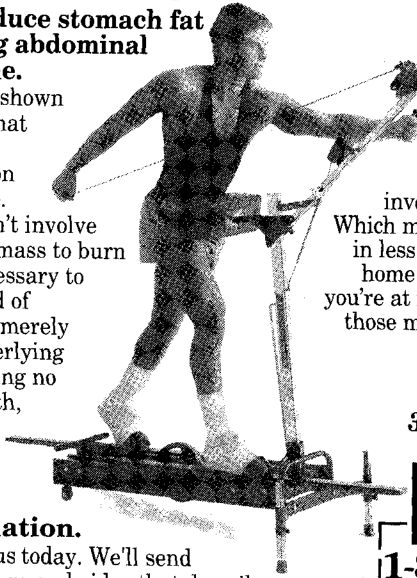

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Yamatomachi, can look out from his office onto some of the richest paddy fields in Japan. *Koshihikari*, a variety of rice valued among the Japanese the way a rare vintage is among wine-drinkers, is grown in those fields, and local people say that it is exceptionally full, sweet, and white because of the area's sharp changes in temperature from day to night. *Koshihikari* rice grows right up to the edge of the parking lot outside Yamatomachi's modest administration building. To Inoue, however, the striking thing about the view from his windows is that it is a view of a vanishing world. Inoue is about sixty, and he has seen a great many changes over the years. A decade ago, he told me, there were twenty-four hundred farmers in Yamatomachi, and now there are fewer than seventeen hundred. "And most of those listed as farmers are only part-timers," Inoue went on to say, consulting sheets of statistics in front of him. "We say there are seventy-four full-time farming families left, but that's mostly the magic of numbers. There are really fewer than ten. Farmers simply cannot survive any longer. Almost all of them have other jobs, in factories or at ski lifts. More than ninety per cent have shifted to what I'd call very, very part time, meaning they earn less than a thousand dollars a year from farming."

One of the problems facing rice growers and officials like Inoue is space. Not many farmers have as much land as the Iizukas. The average rice-producing farm in Japan is two and a half acres. In Thailand, it's nine and a half acres, and in the United States it's three hundred and seventy acres. "Why continue farming, you may ask," Inoue said. "It's partly to do with social and cultural values. Most farmers are old—the average age here is fifty-six—and they want to keep the land that was farmed by their ancestors. The attitude is 'This won't be sold in my lifetime.' Another factor is that they've eaten their own rice all their lives and they want to continue doing so." Inoue wants farmers to consolidate their holdings by renting out their land, if they won't sell it, so that full-timers can form economically competitive coöperatives of four or five thousand acres each. But then there's the people problem. There is virtually no new flow of people into farming, Inoue told me. Last year, the prefecture did a survey in Yamatomachi which showed that fewer than forty young people had any interest in growing rice or any other crop.

"It's disastrous for this area," Inoue went on. "Physically, the land itself will deteriorate. If you leave it for even two years, it will go wild again. Land prices are falling, and as they do, the villages deteriorate, too. Socially, the community will go the same way. We have absolutely no comparative advantage over American farmers. But my chief concerns are these other issues. There are lots of customs and traditions that have been formed through rice farming. We love farmers, and we love the traditions."

Rice has been an important ingredient holding postwar Japan together. It has enabled the Japanese to continue thinking of themselves as a traditional and unchanged people even as they accept extraordinary changes in their lives. No matter how rapid its technological advances, Japan understands itself as a nation of kinsmen, and the basis of that notion is rice culture. No other type of farming seems to have imparted so thorough a sense of community. That is the larger meaning of *inasaku*. Farmers in Japan have always been jealous of their land, as farmers are everywhere. At spring planting and autumn harvest, however, each would accept his dependence on the community to get the work done. Planting and harvesting are mechanized now, of course, but the seasonal festivals of the old world of *inasaku* survive. A friend explained recently that the special place the Japanese assign to rice isn't unlike the place that cattle-raising on the Western plains might occupy in an explanation of the radical individualism of Americans. To reduce the status of rice in the lives of Japanese is considered disruptive; to say that rice should be a tradable item, exposed to the vagaries of the open market, is to challenge a national taboo.

BESIDES religious, social, and cultural arguments, many others have long been advanced in defense of the heavy subsidies that Tokyo awards to rice farmers, and of its ban against imports. The superior quality of Japanese rice is one favorite argument. Imports of long-grain rice, this argument goes, are simply out of the question—it's not sticky enough and isn't easy to manage with chopsticks. And

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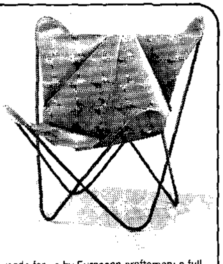

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shorter-grain rice grown elsewhere—Calrose, which comes from California and Australia, is the best-known variety—is said not to measure up in terms of taste. At the moment, however, the prevailing arguments have to do with food security and protection of the environment.

Some environmentalists assert, for example, that the ecosystem of the Japanese islands is dependent for its balance on the green rice terraces that are tucked, it seems, everywhere there is even a small patch of flat land. Food security is a notion that Tokyo's diplomats have been carrying with them recently to Washington and to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade talks, in Geneva. Japan is already the largest importer of agricultural products among the industrial nations, they point out, and they are able to show with scientific precision that the nation is dependent on imports for fifty-one per cent of its caloric intake—the highest proportion of any advanced country. From there, it is only a short step to the assertion that Japan should have the right to preserve its rice production by banning imports of its most important staple food. For a long time, Washington looked upon Japan's rock-hard position on the rice question with benign indifference. But since 1986, when the Rice Millers' Association filed its first formal complaint against Japan's trading practices, it has been more difficult for American officials to ignore the problem. Moreover, Japan's plea to be exempted from GATT's effort to free agricultural trade among all its members is threatening to be a serious stumbling block to the completion of the Uruguay Round of GATT talks, which resumed this summer.

Despite the official subsidies, Japanese consumers pay retail prices for rice which are commonly estimated to be from three to seven times as high as prices elsewhere. Reizo Utagawa says that urban housewives can be found on both sides of the fence. Some would happily feed their children Calrose, even though their husbands might not eat it; others are among the most enthusiastic defenders of the present arrangement, because they are often the most conscious of their families' rural roots and of their relatives in the countryside. But in the end all the arguments in favor of exceptionalism for Japan are really smoke screens. Few

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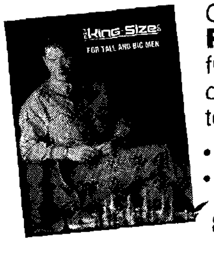

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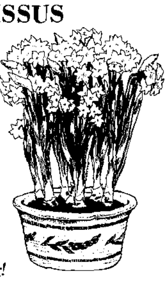

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Japanese will ever admit that the real issue behind the rice debate is politics, which is to say the preservation of the power accumulated by Nokyo and the L.D.P. throughout the postwar era.

The name Nokyo is a shorthand for Nogyo Kyodo Kumiai, which means Union of Agricultural Coöperatives. Its predecessor was Nogyokai, the Imperial Agricultural Association, which was formed in 1943 to increase Tokyo's grip on food production. Nokyo controls one of Japan's largest banks, Norin Chukin, which is similar to Crédit Agricole in France, and it has a bureaucracy of three hundred and eighty thousand employees. Although membership is voluntary (joining Nogyokai during the war wasn't), Nokyo includes virtually the entire farming population. Its influence is immense, because it controls the market for what farmers produce, and because it is a dependable source of credit for them. When I visited Shigeru Iizuka, he climbed down from a brand-new tractor to shake my hand. Next to his plywood shed, a large and elegant farmhouse in the traditional style was under construction, and when it is finished, later this year, it will house three generations of Iizukas. Shigeru and Yasumasa Iizuka were not especially fond of Nokyo, they told me, but they owed it forty-three million yen, about three hundred and twenty-three thousand dollars, and were allowed to pay off their debt at a rate of only a million and a half yen per year.

In Tokyo, the Nokyo coöperative maintains a kind of national secretariat called Zenchu, which is a shortened form of Zenkoku Nogyo Kyodo Kumiai Chuokai, or Central Council of Nogyo Kyodo Kumiai. It is through Zenchu that Nokyo works with the Liberal Democrats and the Agriculture Ministry to determine farm policies. But the real significance of Nokyo and Zenchu is their place in the Japanese political quilt. They wield enormous power. Ever since the L.D.P. was formed, in 1955, the core of its political support has been Japanese farmers, and the Party has maintained their allegiance chiefly by dispensing national funds to rural prefectures in amounts far out of proportion to those prefectures' share of the population. Zenchu and Nokyo are, in effect, follow-up organizations: they use their influence in the countryside to campaign for L.D.P. candidates and to make sure that voters properly acknowledge the governing party's generosity.

The Tokyo offices of Zenchu and Nokyo are staffed by notoriously tight-lipped functionaries. Just as the Foreign Ministry is known as the most outward-looking of Japan's bureaucracies, Nokyo and the Agriculture Ministry are among the most inward-looking. I was surprised, therefore, when I met a senior Zenchu executive this summer who was eager to dispense with the *tatemae* behind which his organization operates, and get straight to the *honne*. Tokuo Matsumoto, a man in his late fifties who has been with Zenchu his entire career, is an economist, not a farmer, and he serves as the director of Zenchu's central committee. "The source of the rice problem is the leadership of our organization," Matsumoto said flatly. "Their basic motivation is to preserve their positions, and they see that the best way to do that is to change nothing. They're not worried too much about farmers, to be honest. Nor do they have any specific view of how Japanese farming will turn out in the future. They're simply concerned with power, and holding on to it."

No postwar politician has given farmers and their institutions a greater slice of national power than Kakuei Tanaka. Most foreigners remember Tanaka, who now lives in seclusion in Tokyo, as Japan's Prime Minister during the events that in the mid-seventies became the Lockheed-bribery scandal. At home, however, that incident was a mere footnote to a long and much admired career. By almost any reckoning, Tanaka was among the two or three most influential politicians modern Japan has produced, chiefly because of his ability to raise political funds in vast amounts and to distribute them, Godfather-like, among voters. Tanaka was a "king-maker" devoted to the little man, and none was dearer to him than the rice farmer in the heartland. Niigata is Tanaka country: it was the seat of his political power, and he was immensely loyal to it. Although the farmers who populate that prefecture hardly needed a major transport system, Tanaka built a *shinkansen*, or bullet-train line, from Tokyo to the Sea of Japan, which runs straight through Niigata. During the winter, it serves skiers from the capital well, but at other times the effect is grotesque. The station serving Yamatomachi, a community of fifteen thousand, is larger than Grand Central Terminal. Near it, Tanaka donated the land for an impressive-looking institution called the International University of Japan; it has an enrollment of two hundred and fifty-five students this year. But these are only the outward signs of Tanaka's most important service to farmers, which was to carry postwar arrangements into the late seventies. It scarcely needs mentioning that Yamatomachi, along with the rest of Niigata, has been solidly Liberal Democratic until recently. Along Yamatomachi's main road, a larger-than-life-size statue of the former Prime Minister, one arm outstretched in a gesture of permanent largesse, looks over a town that has always been special to Tanaka, because his wife was born there.

AMONG the most insightful books about the place of rice farmers in Japanese society is one that is not about Japan at all. "Bread and Democracy in Germany," by Alexander Gerschenkron, was first published in 1943 and has since been reissued twice, most recently in 1989. Gerschenkron, a Russian-born economist educated in Vienna, was essentially a student of political economy. In "Bread and Democracy," his primary focus was the Junkers, the Prussian aristocrats who maintained large estates east of the Elbe River, and their role in the modernization of Germany in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While the Junkers were heavily represented in the military and the bureaucracy, they were basically feudal grain growers, and in the eighteen-seventies they faced a choice on which their survival as a class depended. The gradual introduction of mechanical combines and, in America, the expansion of grain production across the Great Plains after the Civil War were quickly making German wheat, oats, barley, and rye uncompetitive both at home and in the London commodity markets. The Junkers could either adjust, as landed farmers in England and Denmark did, by changing their approach and concentrating on meat and dairy products, or protect themselves by fighting for tariffs against imports. The Junkers chose the latter course. With Prince Otto von Bis-

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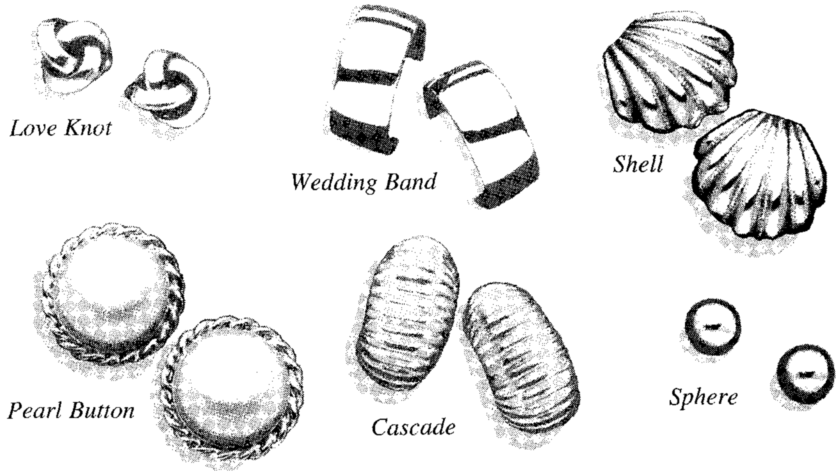

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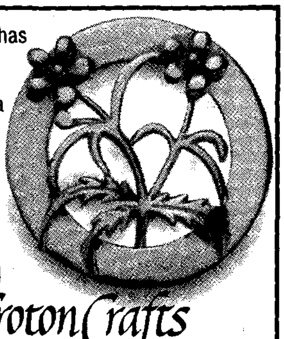

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marck as political broker, they formed a "solidarity bloc" with a rising class of industrialists, who also were hard-pressed by foreign competition. Bismarck made sure that the alliance, known as "iron and rye," got the high tariffs it wanted. In return, Bismarck got a three-cornered conservative coalition, with which he defeated liberals urging greater democracy in the new German Reichstag.

Writing in the early nineteen-forties, Gerschenkron was partly concerned with the political and economic circumstances that led to Hitler's Third Reich, and on that level later scholars have questioned the central role he assigned the Junkers. The larger themes of "Bread and Democracy," however, have made it a classic of economic history. The Junkers vanished as a class in 1945, but Gerschenkron was well aware of the lessons his book held for other late-developing societies. While he rejected the notion that an inverse relationship can always be found between trade protection and democratic development, he nonetheless identified the iron-and-rye alliance as "a fateful retardation in the development of free institutions in the Reich, the states, and the municipalities," because grain tariffs forced German consumers to subsidize their uncompetitive farmers and blocked the evolution of the state from one based on a culture of authoritarian expansionism into one based on a democratic majority. "In this constellation," Gerschenkron wrote, "free trade and democracy had become one."

After Germany, Japan is the most obvious example of a late-developing nation. That is one of the starting points of those Westerners now termed "revisionists" on the question of Japan. Most of the scholars and writers who come under that heading either live in Japan or visit it often. Of several I've got to know here, none are happy with the label, yet they are bound together by the view that the West should reassess the way it looks at Japan. The postwar orthodoxy, developed by American scholars, diplomats, and policymakers such as Edwin O. Reischauer and Ezra Vogel, holds that modern Japan is a democracy much like our own. That was a convenient construction during the Cold War years, the revisionists say, but it is time to recognize that Japan is different from the United States and other industrial

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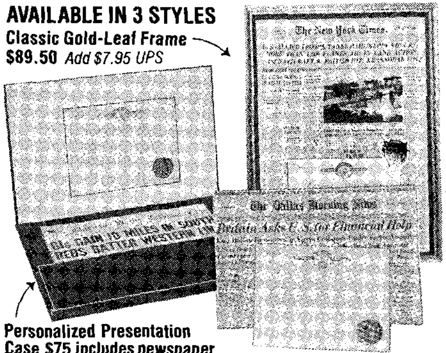

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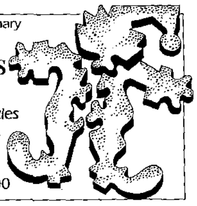

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democracies, because its institutions serve different purposes. Chalmers Johnson, a professor at the University of California at San Diego and a noted revisionist, points out that Japanese institutions do not play a regulatory role; rather, they play a developmental one, with carefully planned social and economic goals. "In Germany you had Bismarck, the farmers, and heavy industry," Johnson said in conversation not long ago. "In Japan it's the L.D.P. together with the bureaucracy, then the farmers, and then the *zaikai*, meaning heavy industry and the banks."

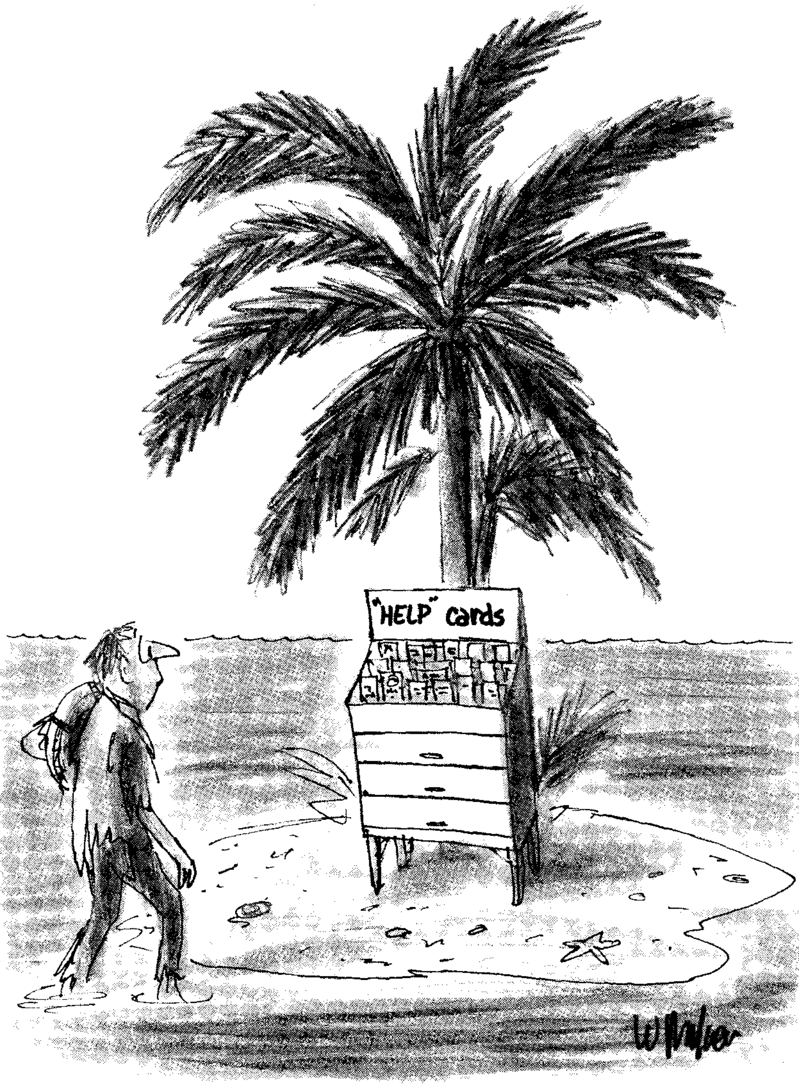
In addition to visiting rice farmers this summer, I had a chance to meet a scholar—a *sensei*, or master—named Suruki Akagi, who has summered every year for the past thirty-five years in a traditional farmhouse near the small alpine village of Fujimicho. (The name means "town with a view of Fuji.") Akagi, who is sixty-seven, comes from a strong critical tradition among Japan's postwar political scientists—indeed, he is a leading exponent of that tradition—and he has devoted his academic career to analyzing Japanese administrative history. In all his writings he has emphasized the importance of the Prussian model, beginning with Bismarck's 1871 constitution, to those who shaped modern Japan.

Rice is not a prominent crop near Fujimicho; instead, farmers grow mushrooms, tomatoes, cabbage, and a variety of corn that was imported some years ago from the United States. One afternoon in August, when the view of Mt. Fuji was obscured by haze, Akagi and his wife, Yasuko, invited me to a lunch of fresh vegetables from their garden, during which Akagi spoke about the German Junkers and Japanese rice farmers. In Germany, Akagi said, it was upper-class Junkers who made up the bureaucracy, while in Japan it was lower-ranking samurai. "It's a central point," he explained. "It meant that whereas the German style of feudalism was conservative and inflexible, ours was more capable of gradual change. The prewar Japanese system wasn't reformed by General MacArthur during the occupation, as you Americans like to think. It was merely adjusted. You say, 'After 1945, Japan started its postwar democracy.' We don't use that term. We say '*sengo kaikaku*,' which is usually translated as 'postwar reform,' but its connotation is 'post-war adjustment of the prewar regime.' "

Until 1945, Akagi went on, the Japanese farming system had been similar to Germany's under the dominance of the Junkers. There were powerful landowners, and there were peasants who were all but powerless. "Under MacArthur, land reform reduced the power of landowners and gave more power to the farmers," Akagi said. "You might expect farmers to come under the influence of socialists or Communists in such circumstances, but in Japan it was the conservatives who oversaw the land reform. That's why the L.D.P. was later able to get the farmers' votes. That's the basis of the alliance that has worked until now."

Suruki Akagi is hardly alone in thinking that that alliance no longer works. Most Japanese political commentators recognize that the L.D.P. must wean itself from its long dependence on farmers. Since the postwar economic "miracle" began gaining momentum, in the early sixties, the population shift from the countryside to the industrial belt that extends from Tokyo south to Kobe has been enormous and unceasing. By Akagi's estimate, it has involved between thirty million and forty million people—roughly, between a quarter and a third of the population. In many rural prefectures, there are fewer people now than there were in 1950. As Prime Minister from 1982 to 1987, Yasuhiro Nakasone tried to encourage a shift in the Party's political base toward urban consumers. Like many such reform proposals, however, that one got lost within the L.D.P. because the going was simply too good the way things were.

When you travel in the countryside here, you find yourself asking how the party that has ruled Japan since the mid-fifties has managed to avoid recognizing and acting upon such evident changes. Then you realize that the answer is there in front of you: it has been in Nokyo's interest to keep Japanese agriculture inefficient by subsidizing farmers. Japan's voting districts have not been comprehensively redrawn since 1947, when the coun-



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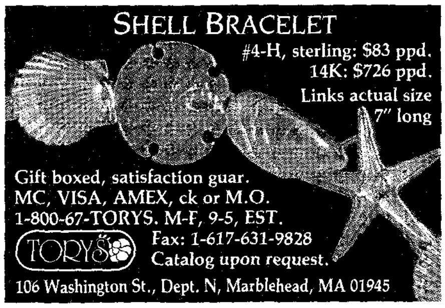

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tryside was still filled with refugees from the cities. Urban dwellers returned home in droves shortly after that, and the population has since continued to drift away more slowly, with the result that those who remain have had an ever more disproportionate influence on national elections. The Supreme Court has never declared the maximum difference in political representation allowed by the constitution. Political and legal analysts estimate it has reached as high as 3.68 to one; that is, in an election for a national legislator, some rural votes have had almost four times the power of votes cast in underrepresented urban districts. Imbalances are regularly challenged in local courts. Sometimes the matter goes as far as the Supreme Court, and its judges invariably deliberate at length, then issue a vague verdict allowing the result to stand.

The parents of Japanese farmers like the Iizukas can usually remember living as little more than serfs under the prewar government. Now farmers are rich and powerful because of Nokyo, the L.D.P., and the courts, while their relatives in Tokyo, Osaka, or Kobe are, by comparison, poor and disenfranchised. Suruki Akagi said, "The people of 'Japan's new middle class' "—he was quoting the title of a book by Ezra Vogel—"have no power, because social democracy, in its broadest sense, has never materialized in Japan. Sooner or later, the L.D.P. will have to decide which of the two groups—the farmers or the city dwellers—it wants to represent."

Whatever the Liberal Democrats decide, most people who watch the rice issue here believe that it will resolve itself within the next ten years. For one thing, there won't be enough farmers left for the Party to depend upon, and, for another, a broadening of Japanese eating habits is causing rice consumption to give way steadily, mostly to wheat. But the L.D.P. has barely begun to respond. Since the Prime Ministership of Noboru Takeshita, which ran from late 1987 to mid-1989, the Party has voiced support for reform of the electoral system but resisted making any move in that direction. And it seems impervious to the creeping loss of influence that Nokyo is suffering. Farmers still believe they have a right to the stability that Nokyo offers, but they have begun to recognize the benefits of efficient production and of what is known broadly as agricultural restructuring. All over the country, farmers who once grew only rice are experimenting with everything from kumquats and mushrooms to cheese and wine grapes. "There's a risk involved if I'm seen to go against Nokyo," Shigeru Iizuka told me this summer. "Officially, all my rice is bought by Nokyo. In fact, though, some of it goes straight to a wholesaler through a kind of black market. If the weather should be bad, or imports should be liberalized, or the gray market should disappear, Nokyo would probably help us. It has its uses. But I try to be as independent of Nokyo as possible—freer to do what I want. As for my watermelons, there is no Nokyo involvement in those. I supply them directly to consumer outlets."

As Shigeru spoke, Yasumasa Iizuka came into the office shed and took a chair at one corner of the desk. In contrast to Shigeru, who was wearing a stained T-shirt and rubber boots, Yasumasa was dressed in a clean white sports shirt and street shoes. He is forty-seven, three years Shigeru's senior, and he took care to tell me that "as of now" his two children plan to follow him into the family business. But Yasumasa was concerned as much about change as about continuity, and the conversation quickly took a political turn. "With the new *beika* for this year, what we're paid for rice has fallen below the level of ten years ago," he said. "Supposedly, the government has calculated that the cost of growing rice has decreased. The reality is different. Modern machinery and new fertilizers have actually increased costs in the last ten or twenty years. Why is the price of rice decreasing when wages and the costs of consumer goods are going up? How can that be?" After a moment's pause, he added, "I like capitalism, but recently we see people who have stood next to us in our struggles who happen to be socialists."

That was as close as either of the Iizukas came to suggesting that he had voted something other than a straight L.D.P. ticket in the last general election, in February of 1990. The Iizukas' district, which has nearly five hundred thousand voters, is now represented in the Diet by four L.D.P. members and one Socialist. In Niigata, to admit having voted for the Socialists is like admitting that you've voted Democratic in a bedrock Republican district of New Hampshire, except that here the transgression would be considered more serious. It was one of the oddities of Japanese politics that during recent political campaigns the Social Democratic Party (known until February as the Japan Socialist Party) rushed into the countryside in pursuit of the farm vote. Although the Socialists have long been thought to stand for the interest of urban consumers, they came up with a platform even more protectionist on farm issues than the one the Liberal Democrats were running on. They not only supported the ban on rice imports but proposed raising the nation's self-sufficiency in grains from thirty per cent to sixty per cent—a proportion that most economists consider wholly unrealistic.

Few commentators have tried to interpret the Socialists' strategy, except to suggest that jumping on a sinking ship was attractive to them because they wanted to benefit from the blame that was sure to fall on the L.D.P. as rice prices dropped and the possibility of imports drew near. The play for the farm vote has made a difference, as Yasumasa Iizuka indicated, but nothing like a decisive one. What I sensed most strongly in the countryside was mistrust and apathy toward Tokyo and a desire to get on with things without Nokyo and the Zenchu bureaucrats, without the politicians, and, if necessary, without subsidies and an import ban. For some farmers, the future has already begun. Half an hour's drive from the Iizukas' nearly completed house, for instance, Mitsutoshi Hoshino farms seven and a half acres that he inherited and twenty-five that he rents. All that land is under rice. But Hoshino, who is thirty-two, has also grown mushrooms indoors for the twelve years he has been a farmer.

Hoshino lives at the edge of Muikamachi, or Sixth-Day Town (so called because there used to be an open market in the town on the sixth, sixteenth, and twenty-sixth of each month). His farm is rough-hewn compared with the Iizukas'. His office is on the top floor of a rickety, three-story building where he grows the mushrooms. Hoshino, a thin, handsome bachelor, clearly loves the life that farming gives him. "I've got no specific plan for what I'll do when the rice market is liberalized," he said. "That will drastically change

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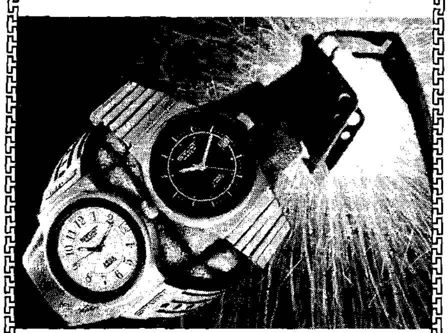

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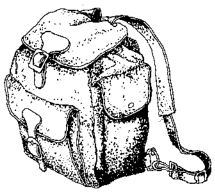

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the community, yes, but if others want to retire, because they think they can't farm anymore, maybe I can widen production. I'd like to compete."

Few of his young farmer friends, Hoshino told me, have any doubt that the rice market will be opened in the near future; several have recently visited rice farms in California, and returned to Niigata shocked by the scale on which American growers produce. Hoshino has already braced himself for change: his revenue last year was twenty-six million yen, or about a hundred and ninety-five thousand dollars, and only a quarter of it came from rice. "A long time ago, Nokyo would say every spring, 'If you come to Tokyo to support us, the *beika* will go up,' and it did," Hoshino said. "Now it doesn't matter. Nothing happens anyway. I was asked to go to the Tokyo Dome before this year's price was announced, but I didn't bother. To me, it's now just Nokyo bossing farmers around, and Nokyo has no right to do that." Before leaving, I asked Hoshino whether he was an L.D.P. supporter. "There are no more Tanakas," he replied, "so there's no one left to vote for."

SHIGERU IIZUKA thinks the odds that rice will soon be liberalized are about fifty-fifty. Since the spring, however, Mitsutoshi Hoshino and his friends have probably been correct in assuming that a market-opening agreement is all but inevitable. In Tokyo, most political analysts and economists who follow the issue believe that Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu has already formed the consensus required for such a step or is forming it now or will form it within the next few months. Tokuo Matsumoto, the Zenchu executive, even offered to pin down the date of Kaifu's success in finding the needed political and bureaucratic support: consensus was signalled in early July, he said, when the Agriculture Ministry created a small internal committee to develop new national policies on land, food control, and Nokyo.

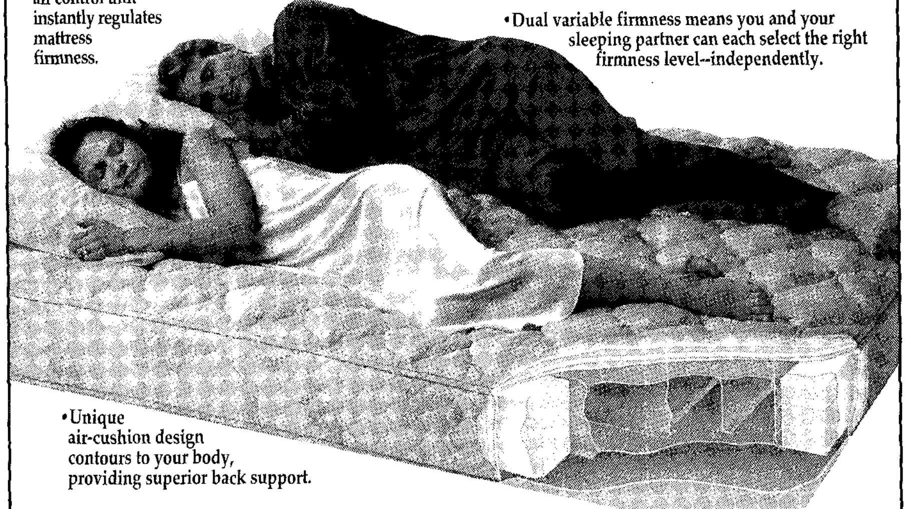
Most of the people concerned with the rice problem also agree that, as is true of many important policy decisions here, what lies behind the Kaifu government's effort to resolve the problem is *gaiatsu*—foreign pressure. It's the same old story, they say, and though relying on *gaiatsu* is not the best way to go about resolving a problem that is now twenty years old, at least something is finally getting done. References to *gaiatsu* can normally be understood as a polite way of saying that Washington has been getting more heated about one issue or another, and that is indeed the case this time. But *gaiatsu* goes far beyond that now. Washington wants Tokyo to get in line so that GATT's Uruguay Round, which was originally scheduled to end last December, can be completed by early next year; in effect, Tokyo has a timetable. Japan is used to being the exception, but as one of the countries that have benefitted most from the GATT system over the past four decades it can hardly afford to emerge as the one country unwilling to negotiate about its exemption from GATT rules.

The question is: What is the Kaifu administration reaching a consensus on? There is no ambiguity about what's necessary. The Uruguay Round takes in more than a dozen different trade areas, ranging from services to intellectual property, but agreement on phasing out farm subsidies—in the United States and the European Community as well as in Japan—has been among the most nettlesome of the issues confronting the Uruguay Round since it started, in 1986. In the jargon of trade negotiators, the solution proposed by Washington, and supported by a number of other important agricultural producers, is called tariffication. Under this scheme, all import barriers would be converted into simple tariffs, and a schedule would then be negotiated for the progressive elimination of the tariffs. "In a way, the Americans really don't have a position on rice—they have a position on the Uruguay Round," a European diplomat here told me this summer. "Rice doesn't even have to be mentioned. What's wanted is a framework on which all commodities can be dealt with, and it doesn't really matter how high the tariff is at the start. The problem the Japanese have is accepting that there can't be any exceptions because making one country an exception would undermine the whole effort."

For more than a year, L.D.P. politicians have taken turns stating at dramatic moments that the time has come to open the rice market. The first to make a specific proposal, a Diet member named Toshio Yamaguchi, said, "It would be a good idea to deregulate rice up to five per cent of domestic demand over the next few years." Yamaguchi heads a powerful Party committee dedicated to studying policies of economic adjustment, and leaders more prominent than he is, including former Prime Minister Takeshita, have also spoken out in favor of some kind of liberalization. Although this may appear to reflect a healthy assumption of responsibility among Japanese politicians, just the opposite is the case. As Reizo Utagawa put it, "this is the process of fertilizing the soil of consensus so that no one leader can be tied to the policy."

What worries the politicians is the policy, not the process. From the rice farmers in Niigata to Zenchu and the Agriculture Ministry, it is universally accepted here that opening the market means replacing the ban on imports with a limit like the one Yamaguchi mentioned; the ceilings on rice imports that now appear to be under consideration range from three hundred thousand tons to five hundred thousand tons per year—or from three to five per cent. Since trade issues are regularly on the front page here, every alert newspaper reader knows that a quota of any kind will be rejected during the GATT talks. For the Japanese, however, "tariffication" has become a very nasty word, and that is understandable. A quota is a manageable mechanism, the political effects of which can be controlled. Tariffication would put Japan on a long, slow slide toward a completely competitive market.

It's hard to know whether Tokyo genuinely misunderstands what is now required of it or has intentionally buried its head in the sand. Washington's negotiators were encouraged when Tokyo's officials first began calling for an open rice market but have since grown concerned as the meaning of those statements has become clear. And concern became alarm when it looked as if Kaifu, during a July visit to President Bush in Kennebunkport, might proudly disclose Japan's conditional acceptance of a quota-based opening. Just before that visit, Lawrence Eagleburger, the Deputy Secretary of State, sent a diplomatic memorandum to the American Embassy here reiterating the American position with regard to tariffication. The contents of Eagleburger's memo soon made the Japanese newspapers, and, by all accounts, the ministries were shocked. All this suggests one thing: if the Japanese rice market is to be opened to the satisfac-



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tion of its trading partners during the current round of GATT talks, we are probably in for another of the five-minutes-to-twelve concessions for which Tokyo's negotiators are noted.

IT'S not a long journey from the rice farmers of Niigata to the *zaikai*—literally, the financial world—of Kabutocho, Tokyo's Wall Street. Each of the scandals to envelop leading brokerages, banks, and corporations this summer has its own set of complex details and its own cast of characters. There have been charges of fraudulently obtained loans, share-price manipulation, and extensive dealings with *yakuza* crime syndicates—all symptoms of "the bubble economy," as the easy-money eighties are now called. The most prominent of the scandals involves the decision by the Big Four brokers—Nomura, Daiwa, Nikko, and Yamaichi—to compensate important institutional investors for losses, most notably when the Tokyo stock market took its spectacular tumble early last year. The legality of such practices remains a matter of interpretation. That, however, is not the core issue; fundamentally at stake are the low priority that the Big Four have given to individual investors and the Finance Ministry's knowledge and approval of the arrangements.

Newspapers on both sides of the Pacific have been filled with stories expressing horror and shock since these dealings began to emerge, but no one who has heard the phrase "Japan Inc." in the few decades since it was coined has a rightful claim to any such response. It has long been understood that the Japanese government functions to support and guide industry, and that one of the most important ways it does so is by making sure that corporations have access to safe, inexpensive investment capital. The lid has been lifted on another part of the conservative alliance that Chalmers Johnson spoke about in relation to the rice farmers, but everybody should have known what was under it anyway. We have seen in more detail than before how the three-way alliance works, but the only scandal, if there is one, is that the alliance, after the excesses of the last decade, no longer seems quite so acceptable to many Japanese.

Now the air is filled with talk of revolutions. If the financial authorities should create a regulatory agency that has the independence and detachment of the Securities and Exchange Commission in the United States, it would indeed be a revolution. The creation of such an agency would suggest, too, that Japan is finally readying itself for the kind of scrutiny that its importance as an international market has brought it. But such an agency is off in the future. What remains now is to determine just how many corporate executives and Finance Ministry officials must be sacrificed before the tumult dies down. Already it is said that Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Finance Minister, is preparing to resign.

More might happen in the countryside. "If rice is liberalized in Japan, voting will turn drastically against the L.D.P.," Yasumasa Iizuka told me before I left his farm. The Liberal Democrats are prepared for that. Toshio Yamaguchi estimates that the Party will lose fifteen or twenty Diet seats after the rice market is opened. That is no revolution, however. And no huge new market awaits American rice growers; whatever share of consumption goes to foreign-grown rice, economists suggest, will probably go mostly to Thai and Australian producers. Another possibility now looms larger: it may be the Europeans who scuttle the GATT talks, and this would relieve pressure on the Japanese. It could be that after four decades GATT is dead, judged here and in the capitals of Europe to be not worth losing elections over.

Why should the Americans remain preoccupied with Japanese rice? The answer can't be measured in sixty-kilogram bags. Washington's trade negotiators may have no broader intent, but a liberalized rice market would represent a significant step in a country whose political institutions haven't matured along with its economy. The important thing now, it seems to me, is to watch without holding one's breath. One of Alexander Gerschenkron's later works, published in 1962, is titled "Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective," and it reflects his career-long preoccupation with late-developing societies. "The bus that is supposed to take a country across its great spurt of industrialization sometimes comes at odd hours and can be missed," he writes. "And the next bus may not be as large or as convenient or as fast as its predecessor. At any rate, the wait for it can be fairly long."

—PATRICK SMITH

BOOKS

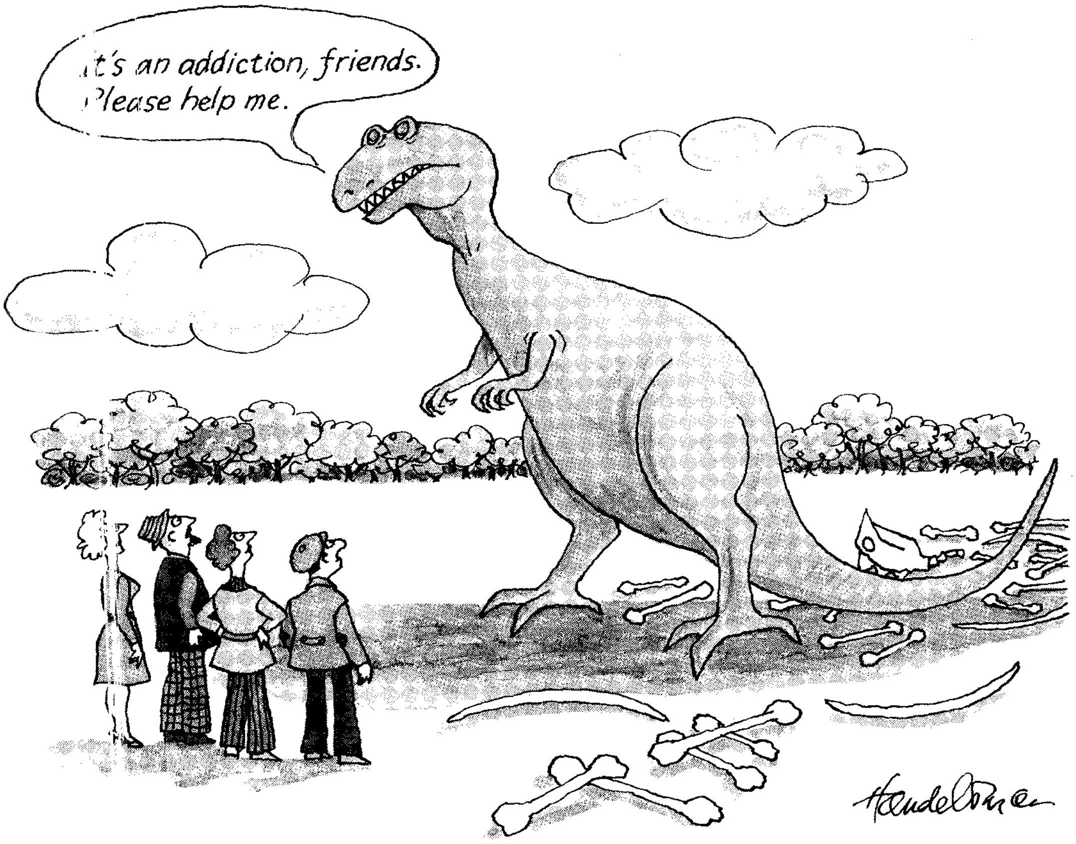
Agnes and Martha

AGNES DE MILLE's "Dance to the Piper" has deservedly been called a classic. An autobiography published in 1952, it told a spunky-American-girl success story, but with a twist: the girl was rich and well connected, and she struggled in a world where none of that mattered; she had to learn spunk before she could succeed. De Mille, a skillful and spontaneous writer, mingled exhilaration and irony in just the right proportions. The opening sentence caught the whole spirit of the book: "This is the story of an American dancer, a spoiled egocentric wealthy girl, who learned with difficulty to become a worker, to set and meet standards, to brace a Victorian sensibility to contemporary roughhousing, and who, with happy good fortune, participated by the side of great colleagues in a renaissance of the most ancient and magical of all the arts."

A dozen more de Mille books have followed, their contents enlarging on the terrain of "Dance to the Piper": personal and professional adventures, dance history, family and friends, Old Hollywood, personalities in the arts. De Mille's writing still has panache, and it has acquired dimension. Last year, in "Portrait Gallery," she published fuller accounts of some of the people who had figured in "Dance to the Piper." There was a priceless record of Sol Hurok's table talk, and some family secrets were exposed, among them the discomfort of her uncle Cecil Blount De Mille at having had a Jewish mother. Now, in "Martha: The Life and Work of Martha Graham" (Random House; $30), de Mille expands and deepens her profile of the woman who was the greatest of the "great colleagues" in "Dance to the Piper" and the most vivid figure in the book, apart from de Mille herself. "Martha" may actually have been intended as a companion volume. The book jacket features twin portraits of Graham and de Mille by the same painter, and the first sentence of the book recalls the beginning of "Dance to the Piper," only instead of being a dissonant fanfare it is an absolutistic gong stroke: "This is the story of a genius, of a woman who made a greater change in her art—in the idiom, in the technique, in the content, and in the point of view—than almost any other single artist who comes readily to mind." It doesn't sound half as interesting as the story of the spoiled egocentric, and it's debatable besides. De Mille doesn't mean that Graham made the greatest change in the Modern Dance; she means that Graham was the greatest, or almost the greatest, of all artists who made changes in any art. Possibly Wagner was her equal, but not Picasso. (His changes affected only painting.) And after Graham the revolutionary genius there's Graham the institution, which in de Mille's view can be compared only with the Grand Kabuki—favorably! For the Grand Kabuki took two hundred years to evolve, while Graham's theatre was the product of a single lifetime.

If all of "Martha" were in this maniacal-monumental vein, the book would not be worth mentioning in the same breath as "Dance to the Piper." To be sure, that is where the claims and the effusions about Graham originate, but the role that Graham plays in "Dance to the Piper" is that of a goddess; and a goddess who inspires, goads, and chastens the heroine is a dramatic necessity. Without that Martha Graham, de Mille's life story would have been like "Hamlet" without the ghost.

The Martha Graham of "Martha" is a much more lifelike creation. De Mille writes out of love, awe, bewilderment, exasperation. She has a Hollywood-shrewd way of dealing with legends, particularly in the later stages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of the book, when the Graham operation comes under strange new management:

> In an attempt to bottle her creations, Ron Protas and Linda Hodes began to put on film and tape and in taped interviews the details of Martha's entire technique, as well as her creations. In spite of their watchfulness, Martha broke out of the constraints.
>
> "I am more interested in achievement than in archives," she said, and she meant it.
>
> But the others knew that only in archives was there real control. And revenue.
>
> Now, under the guidance of Ron Protas, there was an attempt to charge royalties for all usage, not only of composed dances, but of actual technique: an impossible project. . . . Every program and announcement bore the assurance that the Graham technique had been designated and registered as an official trademark. . . . The presentation hinted of Lourdes, all the external trappings were being enshrined and worshiped. And sold. This was called "public relations."

De Mille's heart goes out to the crippled and frail old woman who daily met her obligations to the Graham industry. But she also uses her own emotional investment in Graham's career as a legitimately intrusive biographical device. There was no coöperation from Graham. "She said tartly that she was going to write her own autobiography and changed the subject," de Mille informs us. Not wishing to offend, she withheld publication until after Graham's death, which occurred last spring amid talk of Graham franchises and subleasing contracts. The book speaks for many others who invested emotionally in Graham and remain uncowed by the latter-day House of Graham mystique. De Mille does not trouble herself with this mystique. Her approach is very simply to tell us everything she knows about the woman. It works, and "Martha" is a triumphantly unruly and truthful book, because, for all de Mille's settled opinions on what Graham stands for, her information and her insight keep flowing. "Keep the channel open" was Graham's own advice to de Mille at the end of "Dance to the Piper"; she has followed it.

MARTHA GRAHAM'S autobiography was written on the stage in a succession of dance works that framed her personal titanic encounter with the century. "Blood Memory" (Doubleday; $25) is her crowning contribution to the commercialization of her empire. Full of wisdom and glamour, it seems designed to confuse a public that is already having a hard time telling Graham apart from Georgia O'Keeffe, Katharine Hepburn, and Mother Teresa. Old Graham saws ("Theatre was a verb before it was a noun," "Movement never lies") are interwoven with new Graham tastes (ballet, Madonna), and there is a prodigious amount of name-dropping from the ranks of the rich and famous. One wonders, Are these people being thanked or solicited for financial contributions toward maintaining the Graham school and repertory? Nowadays, "Martha Graham" is a cause before it is a person.

Did Graham the person write this book? In a sense, yes. I believe that at various times in her life she said everything in it. The philosophy is certainly familiar; together with many of the anecdotes, it appears to have been winnowed from speeches, articles, and interviews. As for the unfamiliar material, it is easy to imagine some Graham staffer sitting beside her with a tape recorder and a list of topics: Louise Brooks, men and sex, the women's movement, Eleanor Roosevelt, Zen. Graham is ecumenical; she gets the Pope and Swifty Lazar into the same story. (This sort of thing she could do on her own. De Mille characterizes Graham's speech as "elliptical and in no way logical or ordered.") "Blood Memory" was conceived as a celebrity memoir to exhibit the talk-show Graham, and there's no point in probing its contents. But did it have to be so ham-handedly promotional? Couldn't someone have checked facts? Bethsabée de Rothschild has undoubtedly been Graham's most munificent backer, but she was not what Graham calls her, "my first patroness." In "Martha" de Mille devotes a chapter to the charitable work of Rita Morgenthau, Edith Isaacs, and Alice and Irene Lewisohn. These great women, early and steadfast supporters of Graham, aren't commemorated in "Blood Memory," but Frances Steloff, who gave Graham a thousand dollars toward her first concert, is. Blood memory can be highly selective. Steloff, the founder of the Gotham Book Mart, was a New York character—an "institution"—who died recently at the age of a hundred and one. On the name-recognition chart, she's up there with Bethsabée de Rothschild. Probably no slight was intended to other patrons; whoever put the book together just didn't know better.

There are beautiful photographs—Graham was always a mesmeric camera subject—and from the portion of the book that deals with the family background and the Denishawn experience one can pull out a few nuggets. But these pages are best read in conjunction with de Mille's book.

De Mille was not a Denishawner, but her mother knew Ruth St. Denis. And de Mille knew or knew of Graham for most of her life. Seventy-odd years of memories existed to be drawn on, including an encompassing, for de Mille, friendship. "One does not domesticate a prophetess," de Mille wrote in "Dance to the Piper," and in "Martha" she speculates on Graham's attitude toward her. "She must have liked me, yet very possibly I was also at times a burdensome nuisance in my constant pleading for advice, my talents manifesting themselves in such a comparatively frivolous manner and in such a derivative style." (One may speculate, in turn, whether frivolous-and-derivative, as in "Oklahoma!" and "Carousel," would have bothered Graham half as much as solemn-and-derivative, as in "Fall River Legend.") This friendship, which began in 1929, ended in 1986, when de Mille lectured at Graham's school and Graham received her courteously but distantly. Their careers had never intersected, but they had once been close, or so de Mille had thought.

De Mille's Victorian sensibility was one of several things that she may have felt she had in common with Graham. Both had had a privileged upbringing, a pretty and orderly family life shattered by the loss of an idol-father. Both were seduced onto the stage by the sight of a female star—Ruth St. Denis in Graham's case, Anna Pavlova in de Mille's. Both endured years of hardship in their professional lives. The reader of "Dance to the Piper" will see the resemblance in "Martha"; de Mille doesn't point it out. She doesn't even confuse herself with Graham, but she responds viscerally to the strain that Graham was under, and is quick to register quirks and shadings in her temperament. Graham's bohemianism when she was a young woman always shocks her, because she knows about Graham's propriety. And she cannot fathom the Graham who in old age becomes a fixture on the celebrity circuit. When this Graham, lying in the hospital, lets her hair go white, it is

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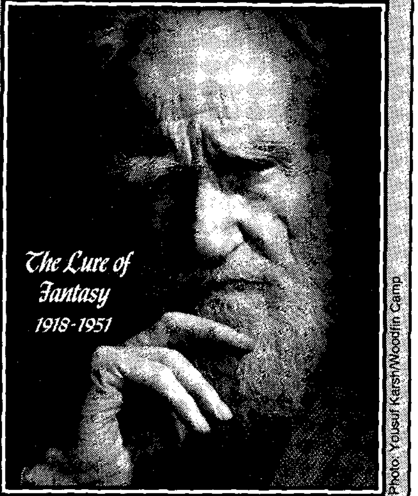

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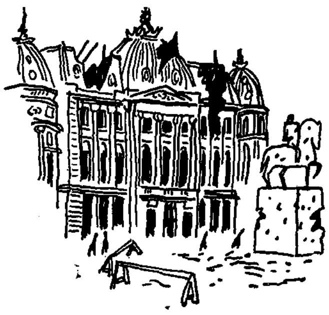
de Mille—de Mille of Broadway and Hollywood—who urges her to leave it that way. “The hell I will,” the great artist says, and calls in a colorist. (The incident is also recounted in “Blood Memory.”)

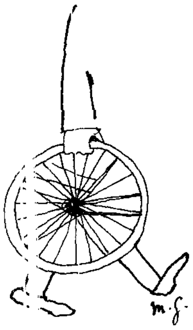
Graham was such an original spirit, so dangerous to be near, and so Sphinx-like in her final years that we may be surprised to discover how unenigmatic her life was to those who knew her. De Mille brings us very close to the Presence—she even has some intimate knowledge of Graham's sex life—yet she is content to interpret Graham familiarly as an obsessed artist, a woman who gave up her life for her work, who wanted love but could never have it. Perhaps Graham's banality was her mystery. Perhaps most women artists covet the life of an ordinary woman, especially in relation to men, and Graham was no exception. De Mille tells how Graham nearly wrecked her company trying to establish Erick Hawkins as co-star and co-creator. “Pearl [Lang] went to Martha's dressing room. ‘Martha,’ she said, ‘he's not worth one of your tears. You are the greater artist. You are carrying our flag.’ Martha raised her ruined face and with streaming eyes said softly, ‘But I love him.’ ”

It hardly matters that de Mille can't seem to decide whether Graham was a masochist, a martyr to feminism, or “the last of the sacrificial females, a nineteenth-century victim.” None of that engages us the way Graham's daily personality does, or her actual behavior (much of it unspeakable), or her conversation, which de Mille is so good at transcribing. She also gives us Graham as she was seen by others—what would the Hero be without the Chorus? A shifting cast of Graham-watchers crowds the book. Every move Graham makes on or off the stage is discussed, weighed, worked at. Graham herself has one confidante, a Mrs. Wickes, who is a Jungian lay analyst. How she must have needed Mrs. Wickes! But was she under analysis or what, and, if not, why? The more inscrutable and intransigently private the woman gets, the heavier the talk gets. You have the feeling that this is just the way it was in life, with marathon phone calls keeping everyone up on news of Martha. You sense the emotional appetites of dozens of people feeding on each burst of gossip—the elation, the nausea. It's all in the book. Out of pages of analytical turmoil and post-facto dramatization, out of masses of ungovernable detail, a life grows, and it grows beyond the rationales; de Mille does not try to restrain it. The fact that she can't ultimately explain Graham to us gives her book a tragic authority.



GRAHAM was born in Pittsburgh in 1894, de Mille in New York in 1905, and both had girlhoods in California. Actually, when they met—in New York, in 1929—Graham was not young; she was thirty-five years old. She'd had her own studio and her own professional life for only about four years, and she was living in poverty in a brownstone walkup. But this wasn't as late a start as it seems to us. Doris Humphrey, who was a year younger than Graham, produced her first independent dances two years after Graham produced hers. The two had spent their youth in Denishawn, which at the time was the only college of dance in America. (Graham did have a late start as a dancer; she took her first dance lesson, at Denishawn, at the age of twenty-two. De Mille, also a late starter, began ballet at fourteen.) Modern dance was still a new idea, and with the emergence of Graham and Humphrey it was right on schedule.

But it was very much an older woman's art form. St. Denis had always danced like a lady. De Mille's opinion of St. Denis's way of moving—“It just was not interesting enough”—tells us what Graham must have secretly felt about it. (Her loyalty to Miss Ruth would have prevented her from speaking out.) When Graham discovered that she had the power in her to transform dance as it was then known, she was well into her maturity as a performer. The possibilities that would have been open to a young body were denied her. As a teacher, she had pupils who were fifteen years younger, de Mille says, “but even while she was standing beside them and dancing publicly with them, she insisted on out-dancing, out-running, out-performing every other woman on the stage, every other woman in her profession." I think that her belated discovery tortured her and compelled her to create for herself those magnificent reformative roles—roles that were youthfully delicate or youthfully heroic. De Mille notes how Graham, in many of her earlier pieces, surrounded herself with stalwart young women; she looked like an orchid amid the cactus. She didn't begin to play tragic queens until she was in her fifties. She didn't double-cast her roles and share them with young women (the Four Marys, the young Judith) until her sixties, or parcel out the bulk of her personal repertory until her seventies. She left the stage at seventy-five, long after the time had come.

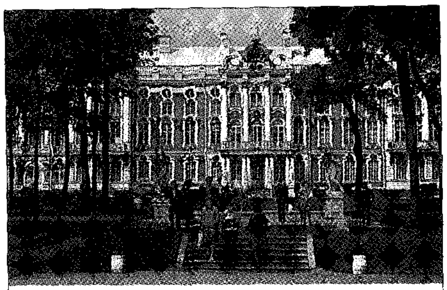


No woman ever regretted old age more, no dancer ever fought her dying body harder than Martha Graham. I saw her for the first time, in "Clytemnestra," when she was sixty-three. She was still doing hinge drops onto the back of her neck, still kicking high and falling flat, and scuttling across the floor on her feet or knees. The feet had arthritis, so she punished them. The hands, too, were gnarled, so she flaunted them. She was, as de Mille confirms, in agony, and drinking heavily. "Die while you're still beautiful," she advised one of her dancers during her last, miserable years onstage. When the power to move on cue left her, she still had incurable stamina, and was forced to lead that half life which all performers but most especially dancers dread worse than death. Turning ninety, she had not forgotten what it was to live as a dancer, to have a body: "As a dancer, you take that body and you train it, almost like a little animal—you discipline it, care for it, feed it, and you adore it. It's a symbol of your life: it is your life." She had six more years to go.

Some of de Mille's chronology is off. She says that Graham danced her last performance in 1968; it was in 1969, and it was a year later (not in 1967) that her retirement became official, with a page-one announcement in the *Times*. Apparently, no one had told Graham about it. She was scheduled to appear on the stage of the Brooklyn Academy the following evening to accept the Handel Medallion, New York City's highest cultural award. She did so, then dryly discredited the *Times* story, saying, "When I retire, I'll probably go to a Greek island, and you'll know nothing about it." De Mille states that she was drunk. I didn't think she was, but then Graham fooled a lot of people. And she never did dance again. Not long afterward, she was hospitalized with what de Mille informs us was cirrhosis of the liver, and told that she was dying.

The history of Graham's alcoholism is vague. Although de Mille says that Graham when she first knew her did not drink, she also reports Louis Horst's telling people that Graham relied on a daily dose of whiskey before she ever had a company. Horst, Graham's music director, had been her lover before being displaced by Hawkins. Nobody ever displaced Hawkins. He and Graham were together from 1940 to 1950; the last two years, they were legally married. His leaving Graham was probably what triggered her drinking problem.

Horst, who had been her mentor, was ten years older than Graham; Hawkins was about fifteen years younger. Even to outsiders, it was obvious that the Graham-Hawkins partnership was a replay of Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn. De Mille reinforces the parallel, starting with the disparity in their ages and going right down the line: her talent, his lack of it; her indulgence, his abuse of it; her need of his managerial abilities, his need of power, his ambition, his conceit. In love, as in all things, Graham outdid her model. St. Denis could occasionally restrain Shawn's more deluded aspirations with a quiet "No, Teddy, no." She didn't mind that he was homosexual. But Graham was sexually dependent on Hawkins; de Mille hints at undertones of sadomasochism in their union. And Graham was desperately determined that her husband have artistic success. Hawkins' ascendancy in the Graham camp was met with disbelief and resentment. Horst, who might have seen it coming, moaned, "This is Shawn all over again, and she swore it would never happen in her life." Ruth and Ted, Martha and Erick—their fatal symmetry is the skeleton key to "Clytemnestra." Graham, with her usual resourcefulness,



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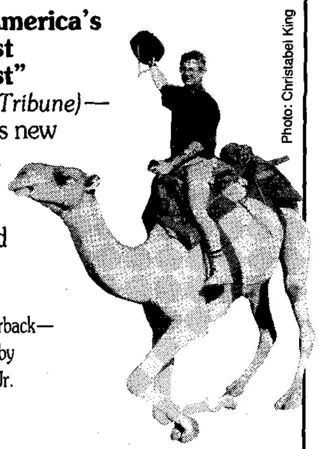

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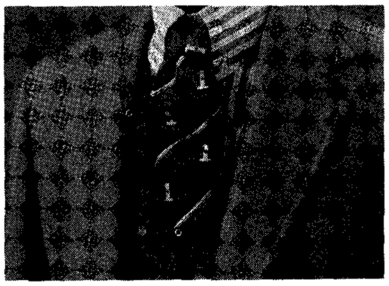

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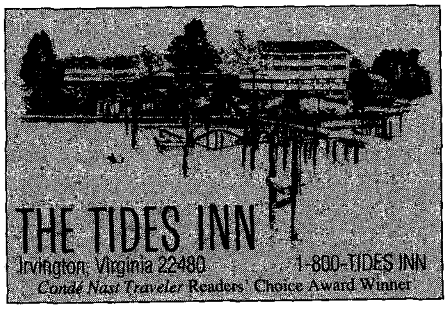

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mentally cast two Denishawn generations as the House of Atreus.

Sex, dancing, and life were for her, as for most great dance artists, indivisible. An earlier biographer, Don McDonagh, quoted her explanation of why a dancer turns her legs out: "The thing that makes you turn . . . is the desire to turn, first, so that everything comes out in desire; and where does desire reside but between the legs, for most people." The gynecological aspects of Graham symbolism became more fraught as she aged. De Mille does not go deeply into this. She does say that Graham's sexual vulnerability was profound, that sex was "the key root to her dynamic organization." And, presumably, to its breakdown. I believe that in some of Graham's late pieces what was on view was a woman's outraged sexuality. Because her bodily *anguish was not relieved by creation,* Graham let her art become a fount of curses. You simply couldn't look at the stage. When the spirit wasn't present, it was awful; when it was, it was worse. And not just because of the drinking.

Graham and de Mille belong to a generation of enlightened anti-Victorian women for whom sex tends to be a totem. Graham expressed the attitude of this generation most explicitly in "Phaedra" (1962), the piece that riled members of Congress. "Phaedra" was about phallic worship and male superiority from the viewpoint of the undernourished woman. (Paul Taylor, Graham's Theseus, later wrote, "Sometimes I think she views us men onstage as giant dildos.") De Mille was delighted by it; all right-thinking women were supposed to be—it was the truth! But you had only to compare it with "Dark Meadow" (1946) to see how far Graham had descended from holy awe. "Phaedra" wasn't erotically charged; it was angry. This was the spiteful Martha, the Martha who bullied her girls and flirted with her boys.

Theatrically accomplished women of the anti-Victorian generation were powerfully motivated by their sexuality, their talent, and their anger. When these women became stars, their talent carried them part of the way, and then their anger drove them. The bigger the star and the longer the career, the deeper and more corrosive the rage. Elders of the stage and screen, they "hang around getting into trouble," as de Mille says. They collect our tributes, and they don't count the cost. De Mille—called by Elia Kazan "the most strong-minded stage artist I've known"—has been fortunate. She became a choreographer and an author. She has grown old and venerable without corroding in the spotlight.

When Graham was told that she was dying of alcoholism, she decided to quit drinking and get well. Then she went back to work and fired everybody. De Mille writes:

> One by one Martha and Ron [Protas] rid themselves of all the faithful workers and the board members—relentlessly, brutally, and finally. It was almost Russian in its thoroughness. No quarter was given and no respect paid to any memories. Onlookers were amazed and even considerably frightened. She or Ron, or she together with Ron, cleaned out the entire Graham organization.

Now comes the interesting part:

> Since 1971, Mary Hinkson and Bertram Ross had been billed as associate directors, and they continued to dance the leads in Martha's ballets. They were mounting the ballets and controlling them, working, as always, for very little pay. Now, suddenly, Linda Hodes, the ex-wife of [the dancer] Stuart Hodes, was put in charge of the repertory dances. She was inexact, they thought, and approximate, even disputing with Bertram Ross parts that he himself had created. He had to prove her wrong with the use of films, but film did not exist in all cases, and so the works were reconstructed imprecisely. According to Ross, Linda did not know the difference or did not particularly care.

Linda Hodes had danced with the company since the fifties. Why she would not have known the repertory is a mystery that de Mille does not explain. All we are told is that by the end of 1973 Ross and Hinkson were gone.

By the end of the seventies, Graham had begun a new life. She re-dyed her hair, had face-lifts, accepted luxurious gifts, and attended openings and parties—"even, God save us, discothèques," wails de Mille—and it was all for business purposes. There was the Blackglama-mink ad: Graham appeared with Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev, shocking the old grads to the core, shocking even the ballet fans. She got a mink coat, and the school got a donation. De Mille does not begrudge her her pleasures, but the change was unsettling: "She looked like a little Oriental deity, a little goddess, an empress, like a miniature Japanese doll. She was tiny and costly, rare and superb. And very remote. How unlike the plain girl we used to know, with the thunder in her head!"

Maybe the plain girl had been too plain. At Denishawn, she had failed to attract the eye of her heroine, St. Denis. Doris Humphrey was the favorite, and Graham was pushed off on Shawn, to become his protégée. To St. Denis she was somebody who helped out. (De Mille says that St. Denis secretly feared a dangerous rival.) In "Blood Memory" Graham relates how she would have to tend St. Denis's addled mother or help St. Denis wash her hair. Not that she minded—Miss Ruth remained ever perfect. And Graham remained forever transfixed by her. Just as Graham's entire career can be read as a corrective of St. Denis, its postlude can be seen as a capitulation to her. In the twilight of her life, Graham became the true and complete Miss Ruth, floating, with her "Oriental" remoteness, above the media circus, neither in it nor out of it. St. Denis and Shawn had been aesthetic snobs, intolerant of kitsch, although they were formed by it and were not above turning a profit in vaudeville. Ruth St. Denis's epoch-making dreams of an exotic non-classical dance style had actually been inspired by a cigarette poster. When Graham posed for Blackglama or appeared on "Entertainment Tonight," she was returning as Miss Ruth to her source. She was finishing what St. Denis had begun, and she saw to it that the end of Modern Dance was in its beginning. Kitsch was flowing back to kitsch.

Meanwhile, there were great changes in the Graham company. New pieces, when they were not parodies of old ones, were ill-conceived, with uncharacteristic choices of subject and music. Everything was designed by Halston, who had taken over the Graham fabric-and-costume department. Of this period, De Mille writes half the time as an outsider taking down the testimony of the disaffected. When she is being a direct observer, her focus is uncertain and her views are ambivalent, and she is much bedevilled by change as an inevitable factor in the preservation of the repertory. She takes heart from the return of some of the old grads to teach, and from the rise of new dancers who have reinterpreted the old roles and got good reviews. In the new works produced in the eighties Graham "continued to be herself, composing and directing and bringing to our stage her unmatched instinct, her impeccable taste, her boldness." "Con-

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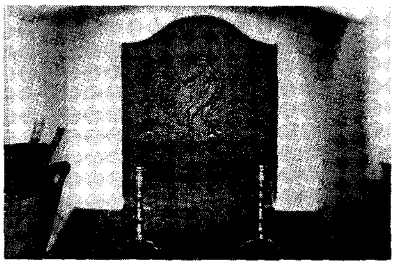

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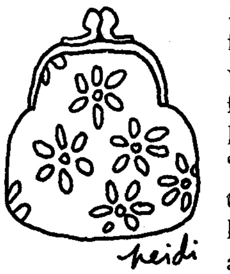
tinued to be herself" in such pieces as "Andromache's Lament," "The Rite of Spring," and "Maple Leaf Rag"? De Mille does not say that the level was as high as ever; individual works had flaws, Halston was deplorable, and the dancers were, on the whole, poor substitutes for the artists who had performed with Martha. Still, what today's dancers perform is recognizable to her as Graham: "Chopin played by a beginner is still Chopin and still an experience to cherish." Yes, if the beginner is talented and well trained. I remember some of the dancers whom de Mille names as artists, and to me there is not the slightest resemblance between them and the current Graham "stars"; and there is not a shred of continuity between the performance style of the sixties—or even the seventies—and that of the Protas era.



Although de Mille says that "Martha's literature" is now being preserved, I don't think the company ever recovered from the blow that Graham and Protas dealt it in 1973. People were right to be alarmed by Protas and Halston and Blackglama. This was not just a new period in Graham's life; it really was a new life. I have sometimes thought that Graham's "rebirth" (her own word) was made possible only by a complete break with her former life, and this entailed the elimination of the Graham image from her company's performance. Graham believed that she could never be replaced in her great roles—that it was better to destroy the mold than present weak copies. She did not intend to let the wonderful dancers whom she'd developed be her successors. They had to be sacrificed and their example expunged, so that the only Grahamites left would be pure products of the school or hybrids trained in Graham technique by others. A Graham company without Graham was going to be a sham anyway; let it be a deliberate sham.

Let it be a completely new company, true to its idea of Graham, not hers. She didn't really have to set her hand to any destructive policy. Once she'd broken the chain of succession, she merely had to let the inevitable take place, and resign herself to functioning as a C.E.O. Naturally, she would look after the choreography, but, as she had never considered herself a choreographer to begin with ("I only choreograph so as to have dances to perform"), this was a task she could accept as part of her new regime.

All that is one theory. Another is that she simply wasn't responsible. She was leading the half life of a retired dancer with the brain of a reformed drunk. She was old and still unwell. She kept herself alive with work, supporting the business out of sheer ego. Ron Protas wanted things a certain way, and she complied. And who is Protas? Originally, he was a fan of the company who wanted to make himself useful. He was there in the hospital during Graham's "terminal" illness, and she thought he saved her. Soon he was casting her ballets and masterminding her purges, or so de Mille was informed. He is now, with Linda Hodes, running the Graham company, and it is he who retains the right to make final artistic decisions.

The Protas story is not greatly different from the stories of other dedicated young strangers who have helped bring about profound changes in the lives of aging artists. In some cases—Graham's, Picasso's—the stranger reordered the artist's life. In Stravinsky's case, it was only the art that changed. But in all instances it was the intrusion of a new person with a new program which enabled the artist to go on producing. The story of Protas's rise, as de Mille tells it, has never before seen print. Too many people do not know what to make of him. They want above all to protect the Graham organization. But, for some old and scarred Graham-watchers, this organization is Graham's in name only. It is a husk, like the empty shell of the queen's dress which is left standing by itself at the end of "Episodes." The queen, Mary Stuart, had a saying: "In my end is my beginning." Life, for Graham, had come full circle, and art had reverted to fancy dancing, more or less as she had found it.

—ARLENE CROCE

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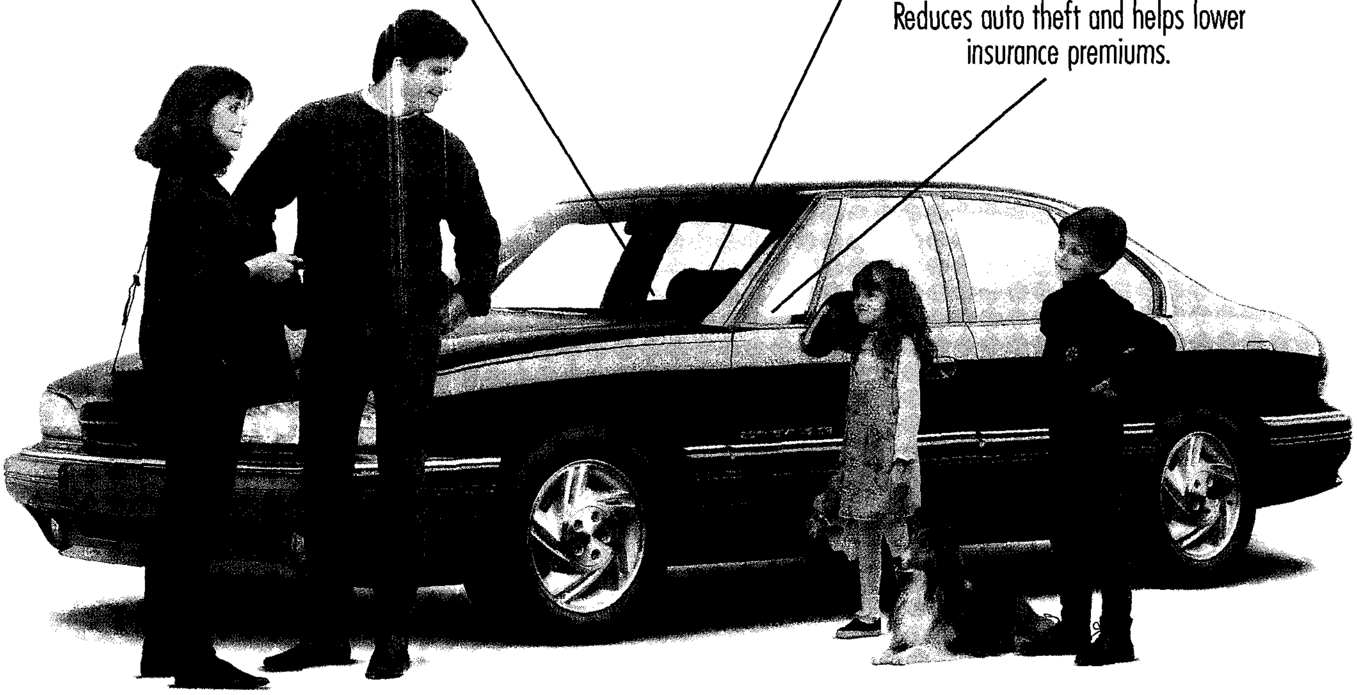

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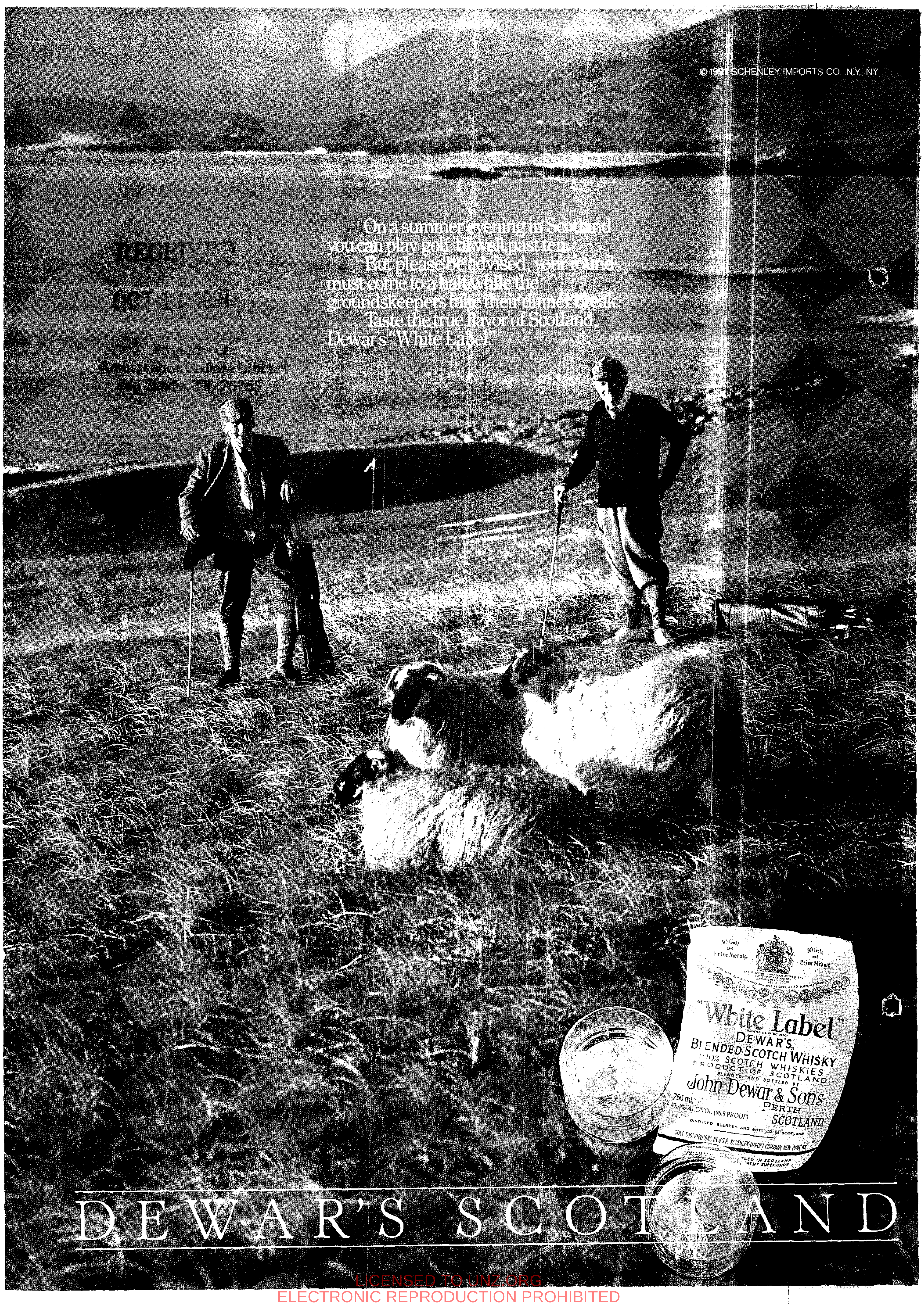
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